



Sinn Féin Submission to the Commission on the

Future of Policing

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Úrlabhraí Shinn Féin ar Dlí agus Cirt agus Comhionannais

GARDA NO ENTRY

Introduction

Sinn Féin believes that everyone is entitled to policing that serves the people, that serves the Community as a whole. Since the introduction of the Garda Síochána Act in 2005 we have seen significant changes in how the structures of policing operate in the state, however, some of those changes have been piecemeal, and incomplete, and a great deal more is needed.

Indeed despite commitments from this Fine Gael Government, and the Fine Gael/Labour Government before that, that they would deliver dramatic reform, we have been faced with scandal after scandal, and controversy after controversy.

Regrettably, public confidence in An Garda Síochána has been damaged quite considerably in recent years. The scandals surrounding the inflation of Mandatory Alcohol Tests/Breath Tests, the wrongful convictions of persons connected to the Fixed Charge Notices, the failure in issuing summonses in other cases, financial irregularities at Templemore, and highly significantly, the mishandling, and attempts to undermine the credibility of whistleblowers who came forward, in good conscience, to attempt to bring to light instances of wrongdoing in the force.

These factors have been exacerbated by the fact that the oversight bodies do not have anywhere near the powers and the teeth that are needed to ensure that an Garda Síochána are properly accountable.

We need properly accountability, safeguards and oversight, to ensure that these controversies, and injustices, are brought to an end, and never repeated.

Sinn Féin wish to achieve effective policing by police services that are accountable, free from partisan political control, representative of the communities they serve, that enjoy the confidence of the general public and are trained held to the highest professional standards and highest Human Rights Standards.

The Commission's report will be a road map as to how An Garda Síochána should pursue reform, and Sinn Féin hope we will see proposals which will radically reform policing.

The Policing Authority has now begun the process of recruitment of a new Commissioner, which will take several months. The process of Garda reform should continue apace, in the intervening period, with additional powers for the Policing Authority, and the ongoing implementation of the Garda Inspectorate Report 'Changing Policing in Ireland.'

Sinn Féin have set out our view that this appointment is a process that should not be rushed, should be comprehensive, and that the

appointment of a new Garda Commissioner, ideally from outside of the state, with a proven track record in the area of reform, is crucial to ensure far reaching reform of An Garda Síochána in its entirety.

We are at a critical juncture in relation to policing and the future role of An Garda Síochána within the state; the plan produced and implemented going forward is not something we can afford to get wrong.

However, if it is successful, and properly implemented, it is possible to deliver a radical new departure in Policing policy, and a policing service which enjoys a high degree of public confidence, trust and esteem.

Sinn Féin has developed the following submission which contains 77 Specific Recommendations, which we feel are essential to the historic transformation of Policing in Ireland that the Commission aspires to, and that the Public, and an Garda Síochána, deserve.

These proposals set out our vision for policing in Ireland.



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Accountability - Independent Oversight Bodies and their powers

The lack of real oversight, and the lack of disciplinary and accountability where wrong doing had taken place has been one of the significant contributing factor to the undermining of public confidence in An Garda Síochána.

There are currently a number of key oversight bodies, with different functions and roles, as follows:

- GSOC investigate complaints made by members of the public against members of the Gardaí.
- The Garda Síochána Inspectorate benchmark performance and promote best practice.
- The Policing Authority is tasked with oversight of performance of An Garda Síochána's policing (not security) functions.
- The Garda Professional Standards Unit examines and reviews, as directed by the Garda Commissioner, the operational, administrative and management performance of An Garda Síochána at all levels.
- The Joint Policing Committees act as a forum for local authorities, An Garda Síochána, Oireachtas members and the community to work together locally in tackling crime and promoting community safety.



Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission

Recommendations

- The Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission needs to be fully empowered and independent in order to fulfil its oversight obligation.
- The powers of GSOC must be further enhanced in order to ensure that the Garda Commissioner comes within the remit of GSOC for investigation purposes, without requiring Ministerial Approval.
- GSOC's powers to secure co-operation from Gardaí must be clarified and bolstered as serious blockages in GSOC investigations have been an issue.
- Serving officers of An Garda Síochána should not be seconded to GSOC.
- A duty of impartiality and independence should be included in GSOC objectives.
- GSOC should have a statutory obligation to report at regular intervals to the Oireachtas Justice Committee and answer questions from members
- It should be the case that where a Garda retires or resigns, any complaint against the departing officer can still be investigated if GSOC believes it would be in the public interest to do so.
- The time limit for the making of complaints to GSOC should be extended from 6 months to at least one year
- The Minister for Justice should not have the power to withhold material from GSOC on national security grounds
- The Garda Commissioner should be under a duty to provide GSOC with the material it requests, and the conscious withholding of information shall be seen as an offence.
- GSOC must be given the right to make unannounced visits and inspections of Garda stations.
- GSOC's access to PULSE must be placed on a statutory footing
- GSOC should have a remit over civilian staff of the Gardaí
- GSOC should be afforded the right to compel witnesses to attend interview, and to provide any documentation in their possession.
- GSOC must have the adequate resources to fulfil its obligations to carry out investigations, including of Protected Disclosures
- GSOC must have the power to recommend the suspension of a Garda
- There should be a statutory framework for GSOC to provide An Garda Síochána with observations on systemic issues arising out of complaints

- Section 103s of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 should be strengthened to ensure better delivery of information to GSOC
- GSOC should have the scope to engage in joint investigations with other state agencies and organisations where there is a need for their expertise.

There is an urgent need to reform how GSOC operates.

Indeed, representatives from GSOC stated themselves in the Oireachtas Justice Committee that they believed that parts of the legislation governing its functions needed to be reviewed and overhauled, some of which has happened to date.

“GSOC operates in line with the provisions of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 and its limited amendments. Almost a decade of experience of implementing the provisions of this detailed legislation has highlighted the fact that in several areas it does not allow for proportionate, effective and user-friendly handling of complaints and oversight. In particular, Part 4 of the Act is, essentially, too cumbersome to allow GSOC to function effectively. I refer to the section in the Act that deals with complaints, investigations and other procedures. It is in need of review and an overhaul.”¹

The powers of GSOC must be further enhanced in order to ensure that the Garda Commissioner comes within the remit of GSOC for investigation purposes.

GSOC’s powers to secure co-operation from Gardaí must be clarified and bolstered as serious blockages in GSOC investigations have been an issue. The Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission needs to be fully empowered and independent in order to fulfil its oversight obligation.

Serving officers of An Garda Síochána should not be seconded to GSOC. This would be in order to prevent Gardaí investigating fellow Gardaí, allowing a freer and fairer course of justice, dispelling both bias and prejudice.

In the same vein, a duty of impartiality and independence should be included in GSOC objectives.

GSOC should have a statutory obligation to report at regular intervals to the Oireachtas Justice Committee and answer questions from members.

It should also have powers of investigation in respect of the work of the Garda Commissioner, as and when required and we believe that there should not be any requirement for Ministerial approval for such an

1 Justice Ring at the Justice Committee 21st Sept 2016

investigation; it should be in a position to do so at its own initiative.

It should be the case that where a Garda retires or resigns, any complaint against the departing officer can still be investigated if GSOC believes it would be in the public interest to do so. The time limit for the making of complaints to GSOC should be extended from 6 months to at least one year (and perhaps longer); with the time period running from the date of knowledge of supposed wrongdoing.

The Minister for Justice should not have the power to withhold material from GSOC on national security grounds.

The Garda Commissioner should be under a duty to provide GSOC with the material it requests, and the conscious withholding of information shall be seen as an offence. GSOC must be given the right to make unannounced visits and inspections of Garda stations. GSOC's access to PULSE must be placed on a statutory footing, granting them access to all the materials they require, by their own definition, in any investigative case.

The Ombudsman should have remit over civilian staff of the Gardaí; although these staff should be accountable to Garda oversight in the normal day-to-day running of things.

The Ombudsman should be afforded the right to compel witnesses, including Garda officers; and we must also allow the Ombudsman to compel retired Gardaí to attend interview and to provide any relevant documentation in their possession.

There has been discussion in the media recently, regarding the fact GSOC were seeking 12 additional staff, but have only been offered five, with one of these being a clerical officer, and with no Principal Officer included. The Protected Disclosures Unit (PDU) currently has three staff, and is operating on a part-time basis only, with all staff having additional responsibilities.

The sums involved here are small in the context, about €900,000. Given the potential costs of Commissions of Inquiry or Tribunals, this is very little.

GSOC were very explicit in their recent memo released to RTÉ that, if the Government failed to provide the necessary resources, they would fail in two of their central objectives; to ensure investigations happen efficiently and effectively, and to promote public confidence in the process.

If GSOC is to be able to carry out its functions, to investigate properly serious Protected Disclosures, that may involve serious wrong doing or malpractice, then it needs the resources to investigate. It cannot do this on a part time basis.

The Ombudsman must have the power to recommend the suspension of a Garda; and we should allow the Ombudsman the power to direct disciplinary proceedings

Complaints of a less serious nature could be considered a “service level” issue

An Garda Síochána should be able to deal with internal Garda complaints of a less serious nature. Those making external complaints of a less serious nature against a Garda officer must always have the option to go to GSOC, but informal resolution may be possible with the consent of the complainant.

We believe that a statutory framework should be created for GSOC to provide An Garda Síochána with observations on systemic issues arising out of complaints, and that these complaints are addressed and remedied in an agreed and relatively short time frame depending on the nature of the issue.

There is a need to strengthen section 103a of the 2005 act, to ensure that the GSOC would have all the information needed to them, provided by the Garda Síochána, as the qualification of ‘as soon as practicable’ may mean more delayed information being communicated.

We support the view expressed by GSOC that they should have the scope and ability to engage in Joint Investigations with other relevant state organisations, where required, that have appropriate expertise, particularly where procuring specialist skills via the private market would be expensive.



A Strong, fully Independent Policing Authority

Recommendations

- The Authority should have responsibility for determining the priorities of An Garda Síochána and should work in conjunction with the Garda Commissioner in the preparation of annual policing plans
- The Authority should be empowered to conduct any of its functions without needing the consent of the Minister.
- The Authority must hold the Garda Commissioner to account and the Commissioner should keep the Authority fully briefed on relevant matters.
- The Authority should monitor and address human rights and equality compliance by An Garda Síochána at every level of its operations and ensure issues identified by GSOC are dealt with.
- The membership of the Authority should be increased to 21 and include members with a variety of backgrounds and expertise including legal, human rights, academic, civil society and law enforcement.
- The Authority should be diverse in its membership and should include political representation decided using the d'Hondt method, and Independent Members. Independent members should be recruited through fair and open competition.

- The Authority should be supported in its work by a number of advisory groups e.g. on equality, human rights and youth affairs.
- The Policing Authority should be able to require the Garda commissioner to submit to the Authority a report on any such matter connected with policing as may be specified. These powers should mirror the power of the Policing board under Sections 59 and 60 of the Police (NI) Act 2000.
- The Department should be obliged to proactively provide information to the Authority where it has relevant information.
- The Authority should have a role in overseeing the allocation of the Garda Síochána operating budget, and in approving significant proposed capital/project expenditure.
- Revise section 41 of the Garda Síochána (Policing Authority) Act to ensure that roles are clarified, and that the Garda Commissioner has a greater obligation to keep the authority informed on an ongoing basis.

Sinn Féin has long called for an Independent Policing Authority in the South which would have real powers, would provide robust oversight, and can effectively hold An Garda Síochána to account. . We believe that some of the practices and powers of the Policing Board in the north should be examined with a view to improving the Policing Authority.

We welcomed the establishment of this office in 2015 – however, we believe that it has not yet been given anything like the powers that it would require to properly fulfil the task it has been given.

The Policing Authority must have the authority to recommend to the government the removal of the Garda Commissioner, Deputy Garda Commissioners, Assistant Garda Commissioners and members of other ranks have not yet been introduced.

. As part of this the Minister is obliged to amend the regulations governing the promotion and discipline of An Garda Síochána in consultation with the Garda Commissioner and the Policing Authority.

We also believe the Authority should have responsibility for determining the priorities of An Garda Síochána and should work in conjunction with the Garda Commissioner in the preparation of annual policing plans, ensuring that they are aware of ongoing practices, allowing them to flag up any potential pitfalls.

The responsibility of the Policing Authority will generally be strategic as opposed to the operational responsibilities of the leadership of An Garda Síochána, however, still actively consistently giving direction. Indeed the analogy offered by the Policing Authority themselves, of ‘the Authority’s functions vis-à-vis the Garda Síochána are akin to those of “a non-executive board”, is an apt one.

The Authority should consult with local communities, obtaining their views and experience of policing and JPCs. They should be empowered to conduct its functions without needing the consent of the Minister. The Authority must hold the Garda Commissioner to account and the Commissioner should keep the Authority fully briefed on relevant matters.

The Authority should, at the very least, monitor and address human rights and equality compliance by An Garda Síochána at every level of its operations and ensure issues identified by the GSOC are dealt with; and with that in mind, in our view the membership of the Authority should be increased to 21 and include members with a variety of backgrounds and expertise including legal, human rights, academic, civil society and law enforcement.

The Authority should be diverse in its membership and should include political representation decided using the d'Hondt method.

This is a crucial point – there is a significant difference, to our mind, between periodic engagements between Gardaí and Oireachtas Committees, on topical matters, as distinct from political representatives being part of the body which has an ongoing responsibility for An Garda Síochána, and this will inform the manner in which those political representatives will dedicate themselves to the task at hand. Policing is a central matter of public policy, one which has far reaching consequences for people's safety, their esteem and trust in the institutions of the state, and community cohesion.

So it cannot be left simply to civil servants – politicians, must have, and will continue to have, an input into policing, and policing policy, while ensuring there is no partisan political control. It is merely a question of how best that should be structured, and it is our view that political representation on the Policing Authority, broad based and representative, is the best manner of doing that.

This can and should be complemented by Independent Members² from civic and broader society. Independent members should be recruited through fair and open competition. There should be a statutory requirement that the membership of the Authority be representative of society.

The Authority should be supported in its work by a number of advisory groups e.g. on equality, human rights and youth affairs.

The Policing Authority should be able to require the Garda commissioner to submit to the Authority a report on any such matter connected with policing as may be specified.

2 This should not be confused with Non Party or 'Independent' elected representatives. This portion of the Dáil/Seanad should be represented through the political representation on the Authority, but there should separately be persons independent from Government, not involved in elected politics, from the wider community, on the Authority.

Where the Police Authority has considered a report on any matter submitted by the Garda Commissioner under this power, and considers that an inquiry ought to be held into that matter or any related matter disclosed in the report by reason of the gravity of the matter or exceptional circumstances, the authority should have the power, after consultation with the Garda Commissioner, to cause such an inquiry to be held.

These powers should mirror the power of the Policing board under Sections 59 and 60 of the Police (NI) Act 2000.

We support the Policing Authority's view that the Department be obliged to proactively provide information to the Authority where it has information relevant to the performance of the Authority's functions.

We believe section 41 of the Garda Síochána (Policing Authority) Act should be revised, to ensure that the Garda Commissioner is obliged to keep the authority informed to the same extent and the same matters as he or she is obliged to inform the Minister for Justice, and that there should be greater clarity regarding responsibilities of the Minister and the Authority, as recommended by the Authority themselves.

From a budgetary point of view, we believe the Authority should have a role in overseeing the allocation of the Garda Síochána operating budget, and in approving significant proposed capital/project expenditure.



A Criminal Justice Inspectorate

Recommendations

- The establishment of a Criminal Justice Inspectorate in this jurisdiction that would replace the Garda Inspectorate and cover all state policing and justice related agencies.

We propose the establishment of a Criminal Justice Inspectorate in this jurisdiction that would replace the Garda Inspectorate and cover all state policing and justice related agencies.

This would be responsible for inspecting the criminal justice organisations including An Garda Síochána, the DPP, the Probation Service, the Courts Service, and the Irish Youth Justice Service.

For example, there is no specific statutory body tasked with overseeing the DPP.

In the longer term we would work towards establishing an all-Ireland Criminal Justice Inspectorate to inspect the range of relevant organisations, agencies and services, related to Criminal Justice.

Process for Appointing a Garda Commissioner and Senior Officers

Recommendations

- The Policing Authority should have full independent capacity regarding the appointments of the Garda Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner and the Assistant Garda Commissioners following open competition by the Public Appointments Service based on best practice in recruitment.
- The Authority must also have the independent power to remove these senior officers.
- The next Commissioner should be somebody from outside the jurisdiction that has no connection to the ongoing controversies or current An Garda Síochána structures.

The Policing Authority should have full independent capacity regarding the appointments of the Garda Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner and the Assistant Garda Commissioners following open competition by the Public Appointments Service based on best practice in recruitment. The Authority must also have the independent power to remove these senior officers; and should hold the Garda Commissioner to account, with the Commissioner keeping the Policing Authority fully briefed on relevant matters.

It is important that the government realises that the Commission of the Future of Policing is an ideal opportunity to begin the process of restoring confidence in An Garda Síochána to the maximum extent. That must begin with the getting the right person to replace Commissioner O'Sullivan, and Sinn Féin believes that it should be somebody from outside the jurisdiction that has no connection to the ongoing controversies or current An Garda Síochána structures.



Community Policing

Recommendations

- Reverse the reduction in Community Gardaí, and bring the number from 744 currently, back up to 2010 levels of 1,200
- A return to the principles in 'The Community Model of Policing'
- Gardaí should be accountable & answerable to JPCs, which have greater powers, comparable to the PCSP in the North, rather than simply being a forum for information, including a direct role in planning Policing and Community Safety initiatives in their Communities
- More funding and greater independence for JPCs
- A duty on An Garda Síochána to have pro-active, routine and continuous engagement with local communities on local deployment
- Community planning as a participatory practice allows for the identification of local issues of concern by the community, the devising of coordinated plans across relevant agencies to deal with those problems
- greater investment in Community Gardaí and Juvenile Liaison Officers are essential in this regard
- Dedicated Community Wardens to liaise with and help the Gardaí and other agencies by reporting any incidents of relevance
- Introduce a greater role for 'restorative justice' in the justice system, complementary to, and not a substitute for civic policing, and in cooperation with An Garda Síochána

Sinn Féin believes that every person has the equal right to safety at home and in our communities. Everyone also has the right to a fully

accountable policing service, imbued with a human rights ethos, and to a justice system in which they can have confidence. Sinn Féin believes that the most effective crime policies, focus on prevention. This means intensive and systematic social investment in marginalised areas.

It means providing intervention and support services for individuals and families at risk.

It means accountable community policing, and pro-active, routine and continuous engagement with local communities. It means effective rehabilitation programmes for prisoners and other offenders, and comprehensive post-release community supervision.

We believe that for most non-violent offences, community restorative justice alternatives can be more effective than custody, for both victim and offender. Such an approach is more effective socially, and it also makes better economic sense – reducing both the incidence of crime and the high cost of incarceration.

The Community Policing Model

In 2007, the Garda Inspectorate published a report, “Policing in Ireland – Looking Forward”, which stated that, “Community policing should be at the heart of policing in Ireland. An Garda Síochána must strive continuously to maintain the confidence of the community. It must be the fundamental policing philosophy at the core of the organisation. That can only be achieved with the commitment of the entire force from top to bottom”.

This was followed by the National Model of Community Policing being launched in 2009.

Additional resources for Community Policing were recommended, however, were often not forthcoming, and changes in shift management, which saw Community Gardaí working night and evening shifts, was also a factor.³

According to the Garda Inspectorate in December 2015, “there are concerns about the resourcing levels currently deployed to community policing duties. The Inspectorate found significant reductions in the number of members assigned to community policing and some divisions have no dedicated community policing units”.

Elected representatives, know from working with designated Community Gardaí, that the difference a good community Garda can make to an area, and to individuals and families, is huge. It can be transformative. Community Gardaí can build up relationships and trust with people at risk of offending, particularly young people, and direct them in a more positive direction, such as through the Garda Youth Diversion Projects.

3 <http://www.thejournal.ie/readme/gardai-community-policing-2534277-Jan2016/>

They also improve public confidence in policing locally, and engrain themselves in community activity locally.

However, there has been significant damage done in the resourcing of Community Gardaí in recent years from nearly 1,200 in 2010, there are now only 744 Community Gardaí in our Communities now.

This has done enormous damage, and it should be reversed.

Fundamental Garda reform consistent with the Patten model in the 6 Counties must end corruption and misconduct, establish genuine accountability, and imbed a human rights and public service ethos. Community policing must be a key pillar of these reforms.

Strength of Community Gardaí 2009-2017*

YEAR	TOTAL STRENGTH	YEAR	TOTAL STRENGTH
2010:	1,182	2011:	1,112
2012:	1,034	2013:	939
2014:	852	2015:	807
2016:	718	2017:	691

Joint Policing Committees, and Local Policing Accountability

Since 2008, Joint Policing Committees have been rolled out across the state, being assigned, generally speaking, to Local Authority Areas (for Eg, Cork County Council, South Dublin County Council, Galway City Council etc)

The main responsibilities of JPCs are as follows:

- To monitor the levels and patterns of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour (including misuse of alcohol and drugs), particularly at District and Divisional Levels
- Advise the local authority and Gardaí on how they might best perform their functions.
- Arrange and host public meetings (at least one per annum, though in practice, it is generally only one per annum)
- Establish local policing fora in specific neighbourhoods where necessary and co-ordinate the activities of those fora.
- Assist Divisional and District Garda Officers with the formulation and operation of annual policing plans.

In reality these forums are relatively toothless, and often are simply a run through of up to date local crime statistics, and an opportunity for elected representatives, as well as some community organisations, to query and seek further information. It is not generally a collaboration between the Gardaí and the Community as to how policing should be managed, resourced and planned in the area.

In practice, often the Local Policing Fora, organised at neighbourhood level, have often more value, giving local communities some scope to discuss particular incidences of crime, or trends and what can be done. However, as this operates at a sub-district level generally, it is not suited to more strategic discussions, around visibility and resourcing, policies and so on. For that, a more powerful JPC system is required.

In addition, with both the JPC and Local Policing Fora, notification of the Public of these events can be limited, and public knowledge of these structures is very low.

There are considerable differences with the system in the north, where PSCPs, (formerly DPPs), have greater powers, and the Gardaí are not answerable to the JPCs in the same way, and very often reports on information rather than calling for action by the JPC.

While it is not suggested to replicate the PSCP system, which itself has its flaws, and has scope for improvement, there is clearly greater powers and responsibilities with the PSCP system, which the JPC system does not have, particularly in relation to accountability, outlined in some of the strategic objectives as follows ⁴:

- Putting in place implementation structures and delivery mechanisms and facilitating resident focused participatory community safety structures that will contribute to a reduction in crime and the enhancement of policing and community safety in the Partnership's area, directly through the collaborative working of the membership of the Partnership, through the work of its delivery groups or through working in partnership with, or supporting the work of, others;
- Increasing PCSP awareness with the public and key stakeholders by planning communications activity to more proactively inform and promote the work of the PCSPs.
- Working in partnership with designated partners, local statutory bodies/agencies, the voluntary sector and the community to deal with, and reduce the impact of, actual and perceived anti-social behaviour and crime in the community;
- Contributing to delivery of the Community Safety Strategy action plans, and initiatives that improve community safety.
- Ensuring local accountability through the Policing Committee's role in monitoring police performance
- Ensuring that policing delivery reflects the involvement, views and priorities of local communities;
- The inclusion of initiatives/projects in PCSP plans aimed directly at meeting the objectives of the NI Policing Plan;

⁴ The full strategic objectives are here - <https://www.pcsp.org/strategic-objectives-what-pcsp-are-expected-do>

- Supporting effective engagement with the police and the local community, with specific emphasis on engagement with children, young people, and marginalised communities.

The JPCs are also under-resourced, with limited funding, and generally staffed by already overstretched Local Authority Staff. Consideration should be given to how the JPCs can operate in cooperation with both Gardaí and Local Authorities, while being relatively independent of both, and perhaps greater liaison with the Policing Authority. A direct link between the Policing Authority and JPCs is worthy of consideration.

We would propose that the Government legislate to reform the JPCs to ensure they have greater powers, functions, and resources.

We also believe that public meetings should be held every couple of months, and JPCs should have an outreach programme to increase and diversify participation.

JPCs should be more central to the development of annual local, divisional, and district Policing Plans, as well as multi-annual strategies.

Policing Visibility and Deployment

There is much evidence to suggest that the perceived risk of detection can have a greater deterrent effect than the potential risk of penalty

The perceived lack of visible Garda on patrol in some areas has eroded public confidence.

Joint Policing Committees, Local Authorities, and communities themselves, have a hugely important role to play in this. Placing a duty on An Garda Síochána to have pro-active, routine and continuous engagement with local communities should ensure that local deployment responds to actual community need.

Good Planning for Community Safety

It is essential that An Garda Síochána are also cognisant of the fact that safer communities is not simply a function of Policing in its plainest sense, but the creation and planning of safer communities. This means greater cooperation with Local Authorities, with Túsla, Education and Training Boards, Youth Services and so on. Some of this should be continuing the work that goes on with these agencies in terms of JPCs and in terms of Local Policing Fora, however it is a philosophy which should inform all aspects of the Gardaí's work as well as of the Department of Justice and its policies.

Planning, investment and development decisions can have a significant impact on communities' prospects.

Local areas where there are few options for recreation, poor

employment prospects, where the lack of safe housing estate design, night transportation or adequate lighting pose particular risks for women or for other vulnerable people: these are areas where different planning decisions can make a huge immediate difference to community safety outcomes.

Community planning as a participatory practice allows for the identification of local issues of concern by the community, the devising of coordinated plans across relevant agencies to deal with those problems, and ensuring that those plans are delivered by all the agencies responsible. The Gardaí must be at the heart of this.

In particular, greater investment in Community Gardaí and Juvenile Liaison Officers are essential in this regard, but all Gardaí should be mindful of these realities.

In addition, under the Rapid Programme for disadvantaged communities, the designated communities were often assigned Community Wardens. This practice has been continued from Local Authorities own resources in some areas. While Community Wardens of course cannot intervene directly to contain such behaviour, part of their role would be to help the Gardaí and other agencies by reporting any incidents of which they may become aware, and liaising between them. This can be an important role in planning safer communities.

Policing Participation in Restorative Justice

'Restorative justice' is an approach to responding to criminal and other harmful behaviour that enables the perpetrator of a criminal or other harmful act to offer restitution to the victim and/or the victim's community. It identifies crime (or 'anti-social behaviour') as an act against an individual or community rather than against the State.

We believe that there is a role for 'restorative justice' in the justice system, we believe it can be more socially effective than 'retributive justice', as it can result in higher victim satisfaction, lower instances of repeat offending, and greater chances of offender rehabilitation and reintegration into their community.

This would be an approach which would be complementary to, and not a substitute for civic policing, and should only be used with the free and voluntary consent of the parties, and proper protocols established between restorative justice projects and the criminal justice system

Protecting Whistle-blowers

Recommendations

- Whistleblowers must be valued, given full protection under the law
- New Commissioner must tackle culture in an Garda Síochána to ensure whistleblowers can feel confident and safe making a protected disclosure
- Resource GSOCs Protected Disclosures Team to ensure they have the scope to investigate Protected Disclosures properly

As recent events have highlighted all too starkly, the Government's commitment to whistle-blowers and the protection of whistle-blowers has been far short of what is required. This had led to the job losses of two Garda Commissioners, two Secretary Generals within the Department of Justice, and two Ministers for Justice. To say that this is unacceptable is a gross understatement following recent revelations.

Whistle-blowers in An Garda Síochána must be afforded full protections under the law, be that the form of the Protected Disclosures Act of 2014 or otherwise. Gardaí who act as whistle-blowers must be held up as a positive example in promoting a culture that has no time for wrongdoing or malpractice within, or under the auspices of, An Garda Síochána.

The value of whistle-blowers and the need to provide robust protections for them should be featured in training, and a New Garda Commissioner must lead cultural change in An Garda Síochána, so that Gardaí and staff, can feel confident and safe about raising issues and incidences of wrongdoings, and to reassure Gardaí and staff, that they will be protected after making a disclosure.

Diversity and Inclusion

Recommendations

- An Garda Síochána must be a force that is representative of society as a whole, being inclusive and reflective of all members that make up its parts.
- An ongoing commitment to more women, more ethnic minorities, more LGBT people, other minorities, and more people from working class backgrounds in policing.
- Policing services should be available in both Irish and English, that services are available in Irish Sign Language, and where appropriate and according to need, in other minority languages.
- That An Garda Síochána implements those parts of the Shannon Report relevant to its work
- The child's best interest should be the paramount consideration in every matter concerning the child within the justice system

An Garda Síochána must be a force that is representative of society as a whole, being inclusive and reflective of all members that make up its parts. We require a diverse force that is reflective of all the citizens it represents. This requires action to bring traditionally underrepresented groups into the policing service, to keep them there, and to ensure equality of opportunity in promotion. This means an ongoing commitment to more women, more ethnic minorities, more LGBT people and more people from working class backgrounds in policing, and in visible positions within the service at both rank-and-file and leadership levels.

Diversity is about recognising, acknowledging, and respecting difference. Difference includes issues such as Gender, Marital status, Family status, Age, Religion, Disability, Sexual orientation, Race and Membership of the Traveller community and any recruitment strategy must reflect the breadth of such diversity, as should policies for mentoring, retention and promotion and ensuring diversity in all sections of An Garda Síochána.

This also extends to ensuring that the language rights of our Citizens are respected, The State has an obligation to ensure that justice and policing services are available in both Irish and English, that services are available in Irish Sign Language, and where appropriate and according to need, in other minority languages.

An Garda Síochána must also ensure that it is cognisant of the voice of the Child in its engagements with Children. The recent Geoffrey Shannon Report, Audit of the exercise by An Garda Síochána of the provisions of



Section 12 of the Child Care Act 1991⁵, reflected the fact that members of An Garda Síochána had shown considerable commitment as individuals to the welfare of Children at Risk.

However that there were significant issues in relation to the manner in which the PULSE system was used to capture data, and the linkages and communication between TÚSLA and An Garda Síochána. We urge the Commission to ensure that An Garda Síochána implements those parts of the Shannon Report relevant to its work.⁶

The Gardaí, particularly under section 12 of the Child Care Act, but in addition in a wide range of other areas, have significant powers relating to the welfare of Children. Children are among the most vulnerable members of our society and as such they have special rights and require special protection.⁷

Specifically, the child's best interest should be the paramount consideration in every matter concerning the child within the justice system – whether that child is a victim, witness or offender, or whether that child is at risk of becoming a victim or offender.

5 <http://www.garda.ie/Documents/User/Audit%20of%20Section%2012%20Child%20Care%20Act%201991.pdf>

6 Ibid, Page 23.

7 IE a person under 18 years.

Public confidence/Communications/ Transparency

- The Government should consider extending the application of the Freedom of Information Act to the Garda Síochána.

Due to events in recent years public confidence has been eroded in a force that is there to protect the people of the state. To have a police force that we are proud of we must endeavour for An Garda Síochána to enjoy the full confidence of the general public; and this process in and of itself is certainly a way of restoring some of that confidence. It cannot however be seen as a means to an end; but rather a new beginning for An Garda Síochána, enabling them to build from strength to strength in the context of a radical reform process.

Key to this is transparency. We have had a force that has, of late, been lacking very much in transparency, with issues of falsified breath tests, the quashing of penalty points, and allegations of an attempted smear campaign about a Garda whistle-blower who shone a light on these issues in particular. We must ensure that full transparency is respected going forward, and that we see an end to a perceived culture of impunity.

In addition the Government should consider extending the scope of the Freedom of Information Act to the Garda Síochána, it is important that the public can feel they have a right to demand transparency, within a proportionate extent, of an Garda Síochána.



Our District Court System and the Gardaí

Recommendations

- Overhaul of the Bail system to ensure it is properly enforced
- The system of issuing of summons is still clearly too poorly administered.
- The Commission should consider assigning state solicitors to Garda Districts to assist with cases
- A working group of An Garda Síochána and the DPP, prosecution services to ensure collaborative working practices between these agencies.

Gardaí spend a considerable amount of time in our District Courts, pursuing prosecutions.

A recent Primetime Investigates⁸ Programme showed a Courts System in Chaos, and in need of reform. It illustrates a state of chaos particularly at District Court Level, and a need for reform.

The chaos and the failures come from many directions, not just the Gardaí by any means. The system is struggling due to the failures of the Departments & Ministers of Justice and Transport, and the Courts Service and Judiciary, but there are certainly areas in which the Gardaí can address failings.

8 Broadcast at 9:35 on Rte 1 on Monday 11th December.

Some of the discrepancies are quite extraordinary and shocking

- 1 in 6 drink driving offences did not proceed in 2016, due to summons not being served.
- This also includes wide geographical discrepancies, 35% in Cork City, but just 4% in Cavan Monaghan, with an 18% National average.
- The discrepancies in percentages of Drink Driving Cases leading to convictions is worrying, with 85% in Westmeath, and 80% in Kildare, but only 34% in Waterford
- 51% of dangerous driving cases in Sligo/Leitrim/South Donegal are struck out yet only 6% in Cork.
- 1pc in many districts for drugs offences faced imprisonment, whereas this was 11pc in Cork
- There were some cases recorded which saw 41 adjournments, before it was completed, taking several years
- In 2015 – 43% summons not served, and in 2016 - 27%
- In Tipperary/Waterford 55% of cases for theft struck out, whereas in Kerry it was 5%

The primary issue that emerged was poor management of the summons system by Gardaí, with many cases not progressing due to summons not being served.

The Gardaí need to significantly improve the issuing of summons, there are still far too many cases which are struck out for this reason. The system is still clearly poorly administered.

Bail needs to be properly enforced – in the Shane O’Farrell case, Zigimantas Gradziska had breached bail conditions on numerous occasions without consequence.

In terms of Court cases and the application of the Road Traffic Act, there is a suggestion that there should be state solicitors assigned to Garda Districts to assist with cases, which is worthy of consideration, as Gardaí may not have the training for many of these cases.

The commission should recommend a working group of An Garda Síochána and the DPP, and prosecution services to ensure collaborative working practices between these agencies.

Training

Recommendations

- Gardaí and police civilians should be trained (and updated as required) in the fundamental principles and standards of human rights and the practical implications for policing.
- Human rights and community policing dimension should be integrated into every module of police training
- Specialised training in information security, freedom of information and records management for all Garda data protection and freedom of information specialist staff.
- Diversity, community and cultural awareness training for Gardaí conducted under the auspices of the Garda Racial, Intercultural and Diversity Office (GRIDO).
- Further training for the Gardaí as a whole in Child Protection, many of whom have not received any specific formal Child Protection training.
- Formal training as well as 'on the job' training
- Internal evaluation teams should evaluate the application of training, and report findings and recommendations to the Policing Authority and the Garda Inspectorate
- Development of a comprehensive training Strategy, including a comprehensive strategy of ongoing Professional Development.
- Specific leadership training which equips more senior officers to lead and develop the organisation in line with modern policing practices.
- Training mediation/conflict management in addition to the use of unarmed skills

Many of the recent reports, such as in relation to the Inflation of Breath Tests figures, and the Shannon Report in to the use of Section 12, have made reference to, among other factors, weaknesses in training; in a variety of aspects of Garda work.

Moreover, the nature and manner in which this training is carried out is essential to the changing of culture within An Garda Síochána.

Dr Geoffrey Shannon found that "A more general finding of this audit relates to a deep-seated culture within An Garda Síochána privileging 'on-the-job' training and learning, over, and possibly to the detriment of, formal core training in the Garda College."

The Policing Authority have stated that they believe "there are real gaps in practical training and the continued absence of a training strategy, including a strategy around resourcing a comprehensive programme of continuous professional development".

We believe there is an obvious need to ensure continual professional development for Gardaí, with a strong emphasis on human rights training and policing with the community in order to achieve the highest possible standards in policing island-wide.

All Gardaí and police civilians should be trained (and updated as required) in the fundamental principles and standards of human rights and the practical implications for policing. The human rights and community policing dimension should be integrated into every module of police training.

Diversity, community and cultural awareness training for Gardaí should be developed to include representatives of all the main political and religious traditions, ethnic groups and other particular minority groups, conducted under the auspices of the Garda Racial, Intercultural and Diversity Office (GRIDO). Garda officers need to have the social and cultural competence to interact effectively with all sections of our increasingly diverse society.

There is also a need for further training in relation to Data Protection and data management for all Gardaí and Garda Síochána staff who use the Pulse System, and more specialised training in information security, freedom of information and records management for all Garda data protection and freedom of information specialist staff.

Further, and in line with the Shannon Reports recommendations, in relation to Child Protection, there is a need for further training for the Gardaí as a whole, many of whom had not received any specific formal Child Protection training.

In relation to the manner of this training, it should clearly focus on formal training, not simply while as recruits at Templemore, but throughout the career of Gardaí. It should, where possible, and appropriate, also involve civilian instructors, and in some circumstances, in wider educational facilities, such as Universities and other third level institutions, beyond Templemore.

The Garda Inspectorate should also conduct regular auditing of the training materials and curricula.

Internal evaluation teams should evaluate the application of training, and in particular, the integration of human rights principles and community policing ethos into the practical aspects of Garda work. They could report findings and recommendations to the Policing Authority and the Garda Inspectorate

It is important that there is emphasis on training in the use of unarmed skills in addition to mediation/conflict management, as with police services in other parts of the world. While not a complete alternative to the use of force, such methods are essential in a routinely unarmed police service.



As well as the initial training and more specialised operational, IT or investigative training, there needs to be very specific leadership training which equips more senior officers to lead and develop the organisation in line with modern policing practices. This should include Team Leading, Leadership & Management, Coaching & Mentoring and dealing with wellbeing within the organisation

Policing Structures, and Security and Intelligence

Recommendations

- Unitary Police force, that can contain different sections and structures within it, but ultimately, a single Policing Service with a single Garda Commissioner above it.
- Police Intelligence gathering methods must be human rights compliant
- Crime and Security Branch of An Garda Síochána and the Defence Forces Directorate of Military Intelligence (G2) come under the scrutiny of the appropriate Oireachtas Committee
- Reform of the CHIS system (Covert Human Intelligence Sources)

There has been much speculation and discussion around whether there should be a split in the Garda Síochána key responsibilities, and that a new Agency be established which would be responsible for the Security of the State and for Intelligence.

This is a not a proposal which we support, and we believe that there is a value in a Unitary Police force. This can contain different sections and structures within that, but ultimately, it should be a single Policing Service with a single Garda Commissioner above it. Otherwise, and particularly if such a body was not subject to effective oversight it would potentially be a body which would be unaccountable, and in danger of becoming a law unto itself.

This is not to say that there are not some responsibilities which an Garda Síochána have which could not be done by other agencies, or which could involve greater cooperation or burden sharing with other agencies –for example the Prison and Courts Services or the Probation Service, in relation to conveyancing of suspects to Court, and the monitoring of Bail are areas where some changes could be considered, by way of example. Likewise it is possible that the Office of the Chief State Solicitor could ease the workload of Gardaí in our courts.

However, given the potential for human rights infringements in the case of an unaccountable Security and Intelligence Agency or service, we would oppose this being separated from An Garda Síochána. Moreover, where there is good oversight, a unitary service would provide considerable advantages in the conducting of investigations and other matters.

It should also be stated that where there would be a separation, the more traditional civic policing body, would likely require or at least desire its own intelligence in any event.

Good intelligence is essential for effective policing. But police intelligence gathering methods – like all other aspects of policing – must be human rights compliant and are governed by the standards in the European Convention on Human Rights. Illegitimate intelligence-gathering methods can jeopardise legitimate prosecutions. This is another reason why police intelligence gathering must be regulated and overseen and such regulation is essential for effective civic policing.

We propose that the Crime and Security Branch of An Garda Síochána and the Defence Forces Directorate of Military Intelligence (G2) come under the scrutiny of the appropriate Oireachtas Committee with the necessary safeguards in place, based on international standards. We are also of the view that the Minister for Justice should not have the power to withhold material from GSOC on national security grounds.

The gathering of intelligence should never be used for political purposes contrary to public interest. The Gardaí must also be committed to prevent future abuse of police intelligence-gathering powers.

In addition, the interception of communications, surveillance and the use of covert human intelligence sources by the police must be highly regulated. It must at the very least be compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. Given the clear north/south dimension to intelligence there must be full ECHR compliance and human rights equivalence between both jurisdictions.

We also believe there is a need for reform of the CHIS system (Covert Human Intelligence Sources) and the manner in which the Gardaí use paid informers. The case of Crevan Mackin in County Louth illustrates such a need, and the subsequent failure to address the concerns of the family, clearly illustrate a lack of transparency and standards in the way that An Garda Síochána were managing informers. In a wider sense there needs to be a shift away from a reliance on the dubious morality and effectiveness of paid informers, with all of the difficulties associated with this approach, towards a genuine attempt to engage with the community, obtaining their confidence, and on this basis enlisting their active support.

Garda Structures more generally, including Leadership and Management Capacity

Recommendations

- Fast-track of the Garda civilianisation allowing Gardaí more time to devote and focus further time to crime prevention.
- Streamline the process for approvals/consents for recruitment of civilian staff so that delays are minimised.
- Putting in Place an Oversight Commissioner
- New Garda staff position of Director of Data Quality
- Ensure that Garda IT systems are such that there is never a possible need for use of personal emails for Garda Business, and that persons who do so, face sanction
- There is a need for a dedicated plan for the roll out of the Code of Ethics across the Organisation.

The issues of the structure of the Gardaí have been dealt with in considerable detail by the Garda Inspectorate report 'Changing Policing in Ireland'⁹, the vast bulk of which has yet to be implemented.

It is our view that this report needs to continue to be implemented, particularly the recommendations in Chapter 4, which relate to Human Resources and Workforce Modernisation. We agree that An Garda Síochána should establish a position of Deputy Commissioner for Governance and Strategy.

We would like to see the fast-tracking of the Garda civilianisation programme to free Gardaí from burdensome administration, allowing them to devote and focus further time to crime prevention.

As of December 2017, it has been confirmed to the Authority that 14 Garda members have been re-deployed on foot of civilianisation. This needs to be significantly expedited, and to the greatest extent possible, all duties which do not require a Garda with full policing training, should be allocated to an appropriately trained civilian.

We support the proposal from the Policing Authority to streamline the process for approvals/consents for recruitment of civilian staff so that delays are minimised.

As with any organisation where there are failures, the questionable culture and such systematic failures as was seen in the Inflation of Breath Test results, and the false convictions on foot of Fixed Charge Penalty Notices. It is clear that the Senior Management of An Garda Síochána is in significant need of reform.

9 http://www.gsinsp.ie/en/GSINSP/1286-ChangingPolicinginIreland_Low-Full.pdf/Files/1286-ChangingPolicinginIreland_Low-Full.pdf

This relates to Human Resources, to Management of Data, and to the culture of impunity that exists currently in the institution as a whole.

Accountability will be central to change, and the ability of the Policing Authority to recruit and dismiss senior officers, in the manner referred to earlier in the submission, and to hold senior management to account, will be essential in changing culture, and ensuring better management practices, as well as the implementation of the Garda Inspectorate Reports.

There is also a need to improve the manner in which An Garda Síochána manages data, and the value it places upon accurate data. According to the Garda Inspectorate Report 'Changing Policing in Ireland', An Garda Síochána does not have an electronic system for managing people or resources. Effective human resource management data is a necessary and vital tool for any organisation that employs over 15,000 people and has a budget of over €1.3 billion. Approximately 86% of An Garda Síochána's budget is allocated to personnel costs, but the organisation has limited data on what skills and abilities its employees possess and how and when they are used. A modern system will advance the goals of the Garda Síochána and support the organisation in ensuring that it is able to manage and deploy its resources in the most effective and efficient manner possible."

The Garda Inspectorate has recommended that An Garda Síochána establishes a new Garda staff position of Director of Data Quality, responsible for data quality assurance across the organisation and specific line-management of the Garda Information Services Centre, the Garda Central Vetting Office and the Fixed Charge Processing Office.

The Development of a Code of Ethics for An Garda Síochána is a considerable positive step; however, having it on paper is one thing, getting it rolled out and across the organisation is another. The Code of Ethics Committee has been disappointing at the slow roll out. We believe there is a need for a dedicated plan for the roll out of the code

Without prejudice to whatever view we may take on individual recommendations which may be brought forward by the Commission, Sinn Féin believe in general terms that there should be an Oversight Commissioner, and staff appointed for a fixed term of several years to ensure that recommendations are implemented comprehensively and faithfully, and to assure the public that the recommendations are being implemented and are being seen to be implemented.

Summary of Recommendations

- The Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission needs to be fully empowered and independent in order to fulfil its oversight obligation.
- The powers of GSOC must be further enhanced in order to ensure that the Garda Commissioner comes within the remit of GSOC for investigation purposes.
- GSOC's powers to secure co-operation from Gardaí must be clarified and bolstered as serious blockages in GSOC investigations have been an issue.
- Serving officers of An Garda Síochána should not be seconded to GSOC.
- A duty of impartiality and independence should be included in GSOC objectives.
- GSOC should have a statutory obligation to report at regular intervals to the Oireachtas Justice Committee and answer questions from members
- GSOC should have powers of investigation in respect of the work of the Garda Commissioner, as and when required, without Ministerial Approval.
- It should be the case that where a Garda retires or resigns, any complaint against the departing officer can still be investigated if GSOC believes it would be in the public interest to do so.
- The time limit for the making of complaints to GSOC should be extended from 6 months to at least one year
- The Minister for Justice should not have the power to withhold material from GSOC on national security grounds
- The Garda Commissioner should be under a duty to provide GSOC with the material it requests, and the conscious withholding of information shall be seen as an offence.
- GSOC must be given the right to make unannounced visits and inspections of Garda stations.
- GSOC's access to PULSE must be placed on a statutory footing
- GSOC should have remit over civilian staff of the Gardaí
- GSOC should be afforded the right to compel witnesses, to attend interview and to provide any documentation in their possession.
- GSOC must have the adequate resources to fulfil its obligations to carry out investigations, including of Protected Disclosures
- GSOC must have the power to recommend the suspension of a Garda
- A statutory framework for GSOC to provide An Garda Síochána with observations on systemic issues arising out of complaints



- Section 103s of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 should be strengthened to ensure better delivery of information to GSOC
- GSOC should have the scope to engage in joint investigations with other state agencies and organisations where there is a need for their expertise.
- The Authority should have responsibility for determining the priorities of An Garda Síochána and should work in conjunction with the Garda Commissioner in the preparation of annual policing plans
- The Authority should be empowered to conduct any of its functions without needing the consent of the Minister.
- The Authority must hold the Garda Commissioner to account and the Commissioner should keep the Authority fully briefed on relevant matters.
- The Authority should monitor and address human rights and equality compliance by An Garda Síochána at every level of its operations and ensure issues identified by the GSOC are dealt with.
- The membership of the Authority should be increased to 21 and include members with a variety of backgrounds and expertise including legal, human rights, academic, civil society and law enforcement.
- The Authority should be diverse in its membership and should include political representation decided using the d'Hondt method, and Independent Members. Independent members should be recruited through fair and open competition.
- The Authority should be supported in its work by a number of advisory groups e.g. on equality, human rights and youth affairs.
- The Policing Authority should be able to require the Garda commissioner to submit to the Authority a report on any such matter connected with policing as may be specified. These powers should mirror the power of the Policing board under Sections 59 and 60 of the Police (NI) Act 2000.
- The Department should be obliged to proactively provide information to the Authority where it has relevant information.
- The Authority should have a role in overseeing the allocation of the Garda Síochána operating budget, and in approving significant proposed capital/project expenditure.
- Revise section 41 of the Garda Síochána (Policing Authority) Act to ensure that roles are clarified, and that the Garda Commissioner has a greater obligation to keep the authority informed on an ongoing basis.
- The establishment of a Criminal Justice Inspectorate in this

jurisdiction that would replace the Garda Inspectorate and cover all state policing and justice related agencies.

- The Policing Authority should have full independent capacity regarding the appointments of the Garda Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner and the Assistant Garda Commissioners following open competition by the Public Appointments Service based on best practice in recruitment.
- The Authority must also have the independent power to remove these senior officers.
- The next Commissioner should be somebody from outside the jurisdiction that has no connection to the ongoing controversies or current An Garda Síochána structures.
- Reverse the reduction in Community Gardaí, and bring the number from 744, back up to 2010 levels of 1,200
- A return to the principles in 'The Community Model of Policing'
- Gardaí should be accountable & answerable to JPCs, which have greater powers, comparable to the PCSP in the North, rather than simply being a forum for information, including a direct role in planning Policing and Community Safety initiatives in their Communities
- More funding and greater independence for JPCs
- A duty on An Garda Síochána to have pro-active, routine and continuous engagement with local communities on local deployment
- Community planning as a participatory practice allows for the identification of local issues of concern by the community, the devising of coordinated plans across relevant agencies to deal with those problems
- Greater investment in Community Gardaí and Juvenile Liaison Officers
- Dedicated Community Wardens to liaise with and help the Gardaí and other agencies by reporting any incidents of relevance
- Introduce a greater role for 'restorative justice' in the justice system, complementary to, and not a substitute for civic policing, and in cooperation with An Garda Síochána
- Whistleblowers must be valued, given full protection under the law
- New Commissioner must tackle culture in an Garda Síochána to ensure whistleblowers can feel confident and safe making a protected disclosure
- Resource GSOCs Protected Disclosures Team to ensure they have the scope to investigate Protected Disclosures properly
- An Garda Síochána must be a force that is representative of

society as a whole, being inclusive and reflective of all members that make up its parts.

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- There is a need for a dedicated plan for the roll out of the Code of Ethics across the Organisation.





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