



Canals Area Local Policing Forum
Public Meeting 7pm, November 7th, 2019
Rialto Parish Hall, S.C.R., Dublin 8

Chair: John Burns

In Attendance: Superintendent John Gordon; Inspector Katherina Joyce, Community Sergeant Martin Comerford, Des Delaney (TUSLA), Brian Lyons (Dublin City Council)

Chair welcomed the public and the officials present, two Dublin City Council representatives were also in attendance, and Cllr. Tina McVeigh gave an update on the fatal accident involving a cyclist at the entrance to the NCH building site; an emergency safety order has been requested, and the residents monitoring committee of the site is looking at the grey area in traffic management between Dublin City Council and BAM contractors. Cllr McVeigh had also requested parking on Rialto Bridge to be investigated by parking enforcement.

Superintendent Gordon then gave a report on some of the organisational developments that had taken place within An Garda Síochána in the past year, including the implementation of a new divisional model of policing which means a realignment of Gardaí, including community Gardaí, from offices to frontline policing. There now exist dedicated, adequately staffed drug, detective and community policing units, community policing numbers in particular having doubled since last year. Another small number of new Gardaí are coming from Templemore in a few weeks, however, there is demand for increased numbers across the country, and events take up a lot of Garda time. Halloween this year had been quiet with many DCC organised events successfully taking place. The fatal traffic accident was currently under investigation and could not be discussed further.

Des Delaney from child protection/family agency TUSLA also spoke during the meeting of TUSLA's role in relation to young people which were raised by the public.

Questions/Issues Raised by the Public

Issue/Question	Response	Action
Gangs of 12-15 year-old youth roaming around still very much an issue and has been raised over several years. Residents from streets across the whole area reported having to call Gardaí on a weekly basis about the ASB/crime committed by these gangs. An elderly lady was being terrorised.	Gardaí took note and will get exact address of elderly person after meeting.	
Entrance to Dolphin House from South Circular Road needs CCTV, as it is a constant site of ASB. It was noted that CCTV installed by DCC already exists, and then a question was raised about whether it was monitored. CCTV had also been unsuccessfully requested for another location in the area. When installing CCTV faces can be pixelated.	Gardaí do have access to DCC camera footage, and view it on a frequent basis when investigating incidents. DCC have GDPR issues when installing CCTV in new locations as even one objection can stop installation	It was suggested that a residents' association re-apply for the CCTV in the location which required cameras
Is it legal to install CCTV at your own property?	Yes, if not capturing other private individuals, however evidence of these cameras can be required by courts.	

Issue/Question	Response	Action
Young people in gangs have no fear for of CCTV, or Gardaí, due to the bravado associated with behaviour of large groups. Lack of volunteering in sports etc. clubs was blamed, as these activities could divert young people away from gangs. Rialto used to have a great strength of volunteers and community spirit. Local Gardaí used to know everyone.	Cllr McVeigh responded that DCC councillors are looking into a model of local authority involvement with young people in the Tallaght area in order to try replicate something similar in the Dublin South Central area.	
Cars had been broken into, and recently a member of public had had a box of red 'Crosscare'-logoed polo neck t-shirts stolen from a car, and wanted to alert those present if anyone knocked on their door wearing one of these t-shirts was asking for money etc.		
What do Gardaí do when they arrive to deal with young people after receiving calls/complaints of ASB?	This depends on the age of children and nature of complaint and whether criminality has been involved, sometimes referrals are made to TUSLA	
LUAS stops on the Herberton stretch are a constant site of racial abuse and other intimidation/petty crime.	Superintendent Gordon is aware of issues around LUAS and had invited LUAS representatives to the public meeting and is working with them to increase safety.	Gardaí will continue to work with LUAS management
More uniformed Gardaí are needed in the area. Many incidents of ASB and criminality are not being reported for fear of retaliation, as perpetrators don't seem to fear consequences. Threats are being made by young people if approached, and it is believed knife-crimes have also recently taken place. A pro-active approach from multiple agencies is needed if this issue is to be finally progressed to a visible effect.	Pressure for more Gardaí exists in every part of the country.	
Summer was hectic with ASB, and summertime and mid-term activities for young people could alleviate this next year. Community response to these issues also has an important role and these kinds of meeting are a good place to start.	TUSLA assess every notice that comes in from Gardaí. If no child protection issue is found, family support by an interagency team is often put in place.	Chair commented that increase in communication with TUSLA was extremely positive.
Dereliction of so many buildings in the area brings down the morale. Illegal dumping also takes place, and there are rats. The stretch in front of Windsor motors has been neglected for 40 years, and DCC response to abandoned cars is also ineffective. Has the 'Rialto Area Action Plan' been forgotten? It was noted that some of the Bus Connect plans were not due to take place until 2027.	Brian Lyons responded that Dolphin's Barn Plan is on hold awaiting Bus Connect decision. DCC are in the process of trying to recover one large derelict site which should have been turned around by the private developer by now.	

It was noted that the large building/site of the old cinema building opposite Windsor Motors was awaiting planning decision on an application to build 300 units of student accommodation.		
More trees are needed and a large-scale planting programme could lift the area. Trees have a calming effect on people as well as reducing air pollution.	A public meeting had been held in Rialto recently about increasing Dublin tree coverage.	ADCC tree planting programme about to commence in Reuben and Herberton
It was commented that every tree in a certain area attracts illegal dumping underneath it, and the falling leaves blocking drains etc. were also an issue for some members of the public.	DCC clean-up of some of these drains had been interrupted by cars parking over them.	Brian will request these drains to be cleaned again
Lack of bins is acute in the area	Cllr Michael Watters is advocating for more bins.	
Lack of outreach services to reach young people in the area.		
Household rubbish bins are set alight regularly, residents of a particular street have to get up at 5am to put their bins out for collection due to this issue. Some cars have also been set alight	Gardaí took note and will speak to the member of public about specifics after the meeting.	
Gardaí were commended about dealing effectively with a car theft incident recently, however, same issues of intimidation by young people keep coming up year after year.		
A particular take-away premises was noted by many of those present as the site where a gang of young people are located and causing trouble almost every night after dark, and Gardaí are not seen in the area after 6pm. A member of public had counted 40 individuals in the gang one night. Garda response/non response was raised again.	Gardaí are out as much as possible, but there is still a shortage of Gardaí in every area of the country. Calls for assistance are allocated a priority according to the seriousness of the issue.	
Dangerous cycling by commuters who don't follow rules of the road was reported, as was cycling in front of cars etc. by young people	Superintendent responded that cyclists are subject to the same rules as motorists	
Most businesses in Rialto don't have loading bays, which causes disruption with deliveries		
Many shop fronts in the area look very tired. No business representatives seemed to be present at the meeting, despite having been leafleted.	The shop front improvement grant scheme is still operational with DCC, and businesses were encouraged to apply for the grant	
Recent trend of parking on the road at Rialto bridge was mentioned; ambulances need to get through here.	Cllr. Watters will put in a request for DCC traffic department to investigate	
Two men on pushbikes were suspected of a recent spate of house and car break-ins. Go-Cars were also being acquired by criminals to carry out drug-dealing other activities	Gardaí took note and Superintendent will contact Go-Car about the suspicious activity	

CLOSING COMMENTS FROM DES DELANEY (TUSLA)

TUSLA now have a presence at Dolphin House. If a concern exists about a child anywhere, the most fortuitous time to intervene is before the child reaches the age of 12, and TUSLA specialises in dealing with troubled young people. They also work with other organisations in Dublin 8, such as Barnardos, and TUSLA's Springboard Family Support Project that is based in Rialto is growing.

Des Delaney also provided details of the new children and young people's service web-directory at www.dublincypscdirectory.ie



www.dublincypscdirectory.ie is an online directory for Child, Youth & Family Services in the Dublin area was developed by the 5 Dublin CYPSCs*. The Directory marks a unique milestone for service information in the Dublin area, providing an ease of access to local service information.

CLOSING COMMENTS FROM SUPERINTENDENT JOHN GORDON

Assured that referrals to TUSLA/Family support, whether made through Gardaí or directly to TUSLA, always remain confidential.