



LPF UPDATE

(AUGUST 2021)

Thanks to everyone who participated in the June 17th online Public Meeting of the SWIC Local Policing Forum. A record of the issues raised was circulated in July, with Minutes of the meeting.

This **Update** will

- share information on actions that have been taken (see '*Actions Commenced*' below)
 - suggest nine headings (see '*What is the LPF Seeking?*') as a framework for the REPORT to the next LPF meeting in October, and report on ongoing work using the framework.
- Seventy-six separate items were recorded on the Visual Record of the June meeting. Each is unique, but together they point to general strengths and to challenges that we face. Our goal as a Local Policing Forum is to bring people together to highlight issues and seek solutions. A concern has been that the Forum lacks direction; we hope that the framework will make it easier to plan and to measure where progress is made (or not).

Actions Commenced:

- A complaint about Garda behaviour has been addressed in a personal meeting.
- Merchants Quay Ireland *community engagement team* will be more active around the Riverbank Building to deal with anti-social behaviour on Merchants Quay; MQI will work with Garda, DCC, clients and local communities to collectively address the concerns raised.

What is the LPF seeking? At the June meeting people took time to highlight what has been positive under Covid restrictions, celebrate community spirit and stress the importance of community supports and amenities. The positive requests of the meeting were:

- More Gardaí visible on the street and in the community; an opportunity to ask questions about about Garda service; an opportunity to ask questions about DCC service;
- Continued and increasing funding and support for community activities and community-based services;
- More safe and welcoming public parks and community meeting places; better public facilities and amenities;
- More positive engagement with young people; greater access for youth to amenities and services;
- Good management of addiction and homelessness service facilities, dealing promptly with problems arising in their neighbourhoods;
- A strong community voice in civic planning and development.

Also, the meeting identified three particular negatives that have serious and continuing harmful impacts on quality of life in the South West Inner City:

- anti-social behaviour;
- persistent, open drug dealing
- street drinking and open drug use;

Almost all of the 43 Concerns reported in June refer to one or more of these 9 issues. These problems are not new and they will come up again so it is worth noting steps have been taken to bring services-providers together to work on these problems. These are examples:

- Supt. Eddie Carroll is Superintendent in Kevin Street for *Community Policing and Community Safety*. Till 2019 a local Garda superintendent had responsibility for all police work – serious crime, roads, court prosecutions etc. Community Policing sometimes came low on the list of priorities. Today, with a dedicated Community Engagement Superintendent, there is a Community Policing Team led by Sgt. Mick Nagle with eight members, each assigned to a small neighbourhood, with an email contact address. Changes such as these are part of an ongoing wider reform of the policing service that aims to put community safety at its centre.
- Dublin City Council has recently published a draft of SAFE NEIGHBOURHOODS, a policy on Prevention and Reduction of Anti-Social Behaviour 2021-2025. The policy sets out clearly how DCC will address anti-social behaviour in its estates, always constructively but when necessary using sanctions, through ‘a multi-agency approach, ensuring close relations with the Garda Síochána, and other relevant (bodies) in dealing with anti-social behaviour cases’.
- Building Community Resilience (BCR) (www.bcrproject.ie) is a major project led by Dublin City Council working across the Dublin South Central Area. The BCR project is an inter-agency response to research commissioned by Local Policing Forums. The research report, launched in 2019, detailed the harm being done by anti-social behaviour (particularly when connected to the drug trade) to the quality of life in the area. BCR involves all key agencies, including DCC, Gardaí, Tusla, the Drugs Task Force and Youth Services (CDYSB).

Ongoing Responses from organisations linked to the LPF:

The LPF is a structure through which Gardaí, DCC, community and other agencies and stakeholders can come together to seek solutions to problems. Organisations have shared information on many relevant actions. Among these:

- Gardaí are supporting community outdoor activities over the summer; parks are included in regular patrols
 - As Covid restrictions are eased Community Gardaí and Juvenile Liaison Officers (JLOs) will resume a wide range of activities in communities, local schools and youth services
 - Garda management in Kevin Street welcome feedback and complaints from anyone who has something to say about Garda service
 - DCC will follow up and respond to all comments and complaints
 - **Contact details** for DCC and Gardaí are included at the end of this Update.
 - The LPF will review *current complaint and reporting procedures* with DCC, Garda and other service providers and will report to the Forum
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- St Teresa’s Gardens Regeneration Board, among other services: supports environmental initiatives and Teenage and Children’s camps; provides a Community Health Worker service
 - Robert Emmet CDP (RECDP) supports Community Gardens, Afterschool Club, Community Tourism Enterprises. . . and more.
 - SICDATF provides grants to support activities supporting Goal 4 of the National Drugs Strategy (‘To support participation of individuals, families and communities’)
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- Bridgefoot Street Park will open in September
 - RECDP and St. Teresa’s Regeneration sponsor community gardens
 - South Inner City Drug and Alcohol Task Force (SICDATF) is supporting action research focused on *hotspots* in parks and other areas where drug and alcohol users gather, to find out more about the groups, why they choose these spots and how they can be helped
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- Coordinated Outreach to Young people – Solas, DAN, TRY, Liberties (SICCDA), SWICN – working together to engage young adults in targeted locations
- SWICN Clubhouse is working proactively with different age groups in select areas to build relationships and encourage engagement
- SWICN Programmes support young adults seeking employment
- RECDP operates two social enterprises training and employing young adults
- In Autumn 2021 SICDATF will meet CDYSB and funded Youth Services to explore how SICDATF can work appropriately with Youth Services in the south inner city
- Saint Teresa’s Regeneration will continue to support the TRY Project (Targeted Response for Youth) to work with teenagers and young adults at risk of being caught up in the drugs trade

- MQI will work with others to address problems on Merchants Quay
- SICDATF and MQI have an Assertive Inreach Project, assisting people with addiction issues living in homeless accommodation to seek help
- RECDP provides education targeting people in homeless accommodation

- RECDP provides capacity building support and training to communities on planning and local development issues

- DCC’s policy to prevent and reduce anti-social behaviour in its estates is vigorously pursued
- Gardaí are issuing Anti-Social Behaviour Warnings.
- SICDATF and CAN (Community Action Network) are talking to residents in a small number of locations about neighbourhood problems, including anti-social behaviour. The LPF, with SICDATF and the BCR project (see above), will bring together a team in the Autumn to address problems at neighbourhood level, based on what has been learned

- Combating drug dealing and drug related crime is a Garda priority
- SICDATF and Gardaí meet regularly to address issues relating to public drug and alcohol use, drug-related intimidation and debt
- SICDATF and CAN (Community Action Network) are working on a training tender to provide training support for people experiencing Drug Related Intimidation

- Gardaí are using Dublin City Bye-Laws (which include a provision to impose fines) to combat street drinking
- SICDATF and An Garda Síochána are looking for practical interventions to address use of drugs and alcohol in public places (action research)
- This area is included in a wider Garda/SICDATF strategic initiative responding to problem alcohol use (Community Alcohol Detox), aiming to develop integrated responses among agencies and services, to improve the health and well-being of people engaged in harmful drinking and offer treatment opportunities to those who wish to address their alcohol use.

Contact Details:

Gardaí: DMRSouthCentral.Community@garda.ie (Community Policing), 01 666 9400 (Kevin St.)
 DCC: SouthCentral@dublincity.ie (City Council). 01 222 2222 (one number for all areas).
 SWIC Local Policing Forum: D8Forum@gmail.com.