

Meeting Notes of South Tipperary Safety & Security Partnership

Held in Fire Station, Heywood Road on 17th June 2009

Present: Hilery Dilworth – South Tipperary Development Company, Margo Hayes – Rapid Co-ordinator Carrick on Suir, Stephen O’Sullivan, An Garda Síochána, Siobhan Madden – Community Policing Unit Clonmel, Andy Neill – Community Policing Unit Clonmel, Ian Barret – An Garda Síochána, Andrew McMahon- HSE, Denis Shanahan – Respond, Liam Kelly – Muintir na Tire, Peter Butler – Garda Síochána, Mark Ryan – Rapid Tipperary Town, Marie Fogarty – Tipperary Town Residents Network, Marie O’Connell – Community Rep – Rapid Tipperary Town, Jean Nelson – Community Rep –Rapid Tipperary Town, Carol O’Leary – An Garda Síochána, Deirdre O’Dwyer – South Tipperary Development Company, Tess Collins – South Tipperary County Council, Marie O’Gorman – Clonmel Borough Council, Ann Ryan – South Tipperary County Council

Apologies: Marie Boland, Geraldine Mulane, Shirley Fahy, Julie White – Community & Voluntary Forum

1. Introduction & Minutes (10.30 – 10.40)
Meeting notes were agreed.

2. Main Theme – Community Alert and Neighborhood Watch, Progress & Issues
Liam Kelly, Community Alert National Co-ordinator, Ian Barret & Peter Butler, Garda Síochána gave inputs on Community Alert and Neighbourhood Watch. Liam Kelly’s presentation is attached. All speakers gave very good advice on setting up groups and the supports that are available.

The following points were discussed:

- Figures from call monitoring stations indicate that about 80% of calls are social calls, 18% medical and 1% crime related
- How successful is the community alert – very hard to measure but in 1 day alone 5 lives were saved
- Alarms and supports keeps older people in their houses longer
- Good links in place with HSE staff and home help staff who encourage older people to use alarms etc
- Success of community alert group is measured by how active they are, are they having regular meeting, do they have projects ongoing, are they getting grants
- Most calls to monitoring stations are on Monday morning – often older people have trips to day care centres during week or go to collect pension and have some interaction – most of calls are after weekend
- The need for social interaction is clearly highlighted by breakdown of calls – community alert groups and neighbour hood watch group are now starting to focus on befriending projects

- Good morning Tipperary in Newcastle is a befriending project that calls older people during the week to check up on them and see if they are ok – Good morning Tipperary can cover the whole of South Tipperary
- The idea of day care centres being developed to offer wider supports for the elderly was discussed. Mark Ryan outline that he was involved in a County Development Board sub group that put a proposal to Dept of Rural and Gaelteacht Affairs to develop the day care centres are resource centres that offered a wide range of services to the elderly – the group were seeking a 3 year funding programme for day care centres. The funding of such a proposal may be difficult in the present financial circumstances.
- Garda Commissioner has prioritised the elderly
- Ian Barret gave an outline of the Clonmore group that has recently established a successful Community Alert – a proactive group was established and they received advice on tackling a number of issues in the community with the support of agencies
- Ballyclerihan was cited as another good model as they brought younger people into the group who are now organising activities for younger people
- It was noted that it wasn't just about the amount of people in a group – a small group could equally deliver a successful neighbourhood watch
- The difficulty of establishing community alert in some housing estates was discussed as many people felt intimidated and felt that they would be informing on neighbours etc. It was felt the more Garda presence in an area the more likely it was to succeed. The presence of the Community Garda Unit in Clonmel has considerably helped as the Guards have developed relationships with everyone in the estate so nobody can be singled out as having 'given information'.
- Guards pointed out that even if there isn't a neighbourhood watch, residents should invite Guards to residents meeting regularly – it doesn't have to be called 'Neighbourhood Watch', it could be less formal so that some of the intimidation issues might be reduced.
- The establishment of Garda liaison officer to estates in Tipperary Town has been useful but resources is an issue that means Guards cant have a strong presence on the estates
- If its not possible to have a Community Alert or Neighbourhood Watch in place then areas are assigned a liaison Guard

3. Input into Garda Síochána Corporate Strategy 2010 – 2012
(11.45 – 12.00)

Ann outlined that the County Development Board has been requested by the Deputy Commissioner of An Garda Síochána to give some input into the formulation of a new Garda Corporate Strategy for the period 2010 – 2012) and that the input of the group into this submission would be very welcome.

The following points were raised by the group for inclusion in the submission:

- Community Policing Units are very effective and are essential to be rolled out. It is important that all areas have coverage in relation to community policing. A national approach is needed so that its not hit and miss.
- Rapid areas should get priority in relation to community policing units.
- Partnership approach between the Garda Síochána, other agencies and the community is essential to address issues and problems
- JLO services
 - should be more resourced
 - should not just focus on diversion or kids already 'in trouble' – should try and get them before they get 'in trouble'
 - should be linked into all youth services
- Garda Síochána should put pressure on to develop more partnerships with youth organisations and should campaign to put youth service delivery on a more stable footing.
- Garda Síochána should encourage adequate resourceing of youth work
- Home liaison teacher is very important so that children at risk are identified and supported at a very young age
- Rural areas have very little coverage in relation to youth supports which impacts on diversion away from crime
- Budgets for youth diversion should be increased not reduced and existing resources should be protected
- Drug task groups funding should be restored and increased – Garda Síochána should encourage the focus to be on prevention
- Communities should be supported around drug awareness
- There should be more enforcement re public drinking
- Needs to be more reporting – this will only happen with more Garda / Community links
- Confidential reporting line re drugs should be promoted more

It was agreed that Ann could go back through notes of previous meetings and include any other suggestions from them. Ann to circulate copy of full submission at next meeting.

4. Update on bonfire actions (12.00 – 12.25)

It was agreed that everybody would review the meeting notes of the 8th April with a view to moving on actions identified re bonfires. It was agreed the topic would be given time for discussion at the next meeting.

It was agreed that the next meeting would focus on preventing and dealing with Anti Social Behaviour.

The next meeting was agreed for 8th September in the Fire Station, Heywood Road, Clonmel at 10.30