

Comhairle Contae **Lú**  
**Louth** County Council

# LOUTH JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE **COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY**

## 2016-2022

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Public representatives, Louth Co Council.

The CEO, Directors of Service, and staff of Louth Co Council.

The Chief Superintendent for Louth and members of An Garda Síochána.

Valerie Artherton, PEACE III Programme Manager, Louth Co Council.

Groups and consultees county-wide who engaged with the team throughout the process.



TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
Message from CE and Chief Superintendent	2 - 3
Introduction	4
1. County Louth: A Snapshot	4
2. Community Safety Strategy in Co. Louth	5
3. Enabling Communities	6
4. The Brief	9
5. The Challenge	10
6. The Community Safety Strategy Consultation Process	11
7. Our Focus	12
8. The Community Safety Strategy Structure	14
The Community Safety Strategy	16
Our Vision	17
Our Mission	17
Our Approach	17
Our Themes	17
Theme 1: Building Safe Communities	18
Theme 2: Tackling Alcohol and Substance Misuse	21
Theme 3: Nurturing Children and Young People	24
Theme 4: Supporting Older and Vulnerable People	26
Theme 5: Encouraging Integrated Communities	28
Bibliography	30
Appendix	33

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

As Chief Executive of Louth County Council and Chair of the Peace and Reconciliation Partnership, I welcome this county-wide Community Safety Strategy. Not only does it reflect the Peace Programme's vision for the cross-border area, it pushes out the boundaries in strengthening existing partnerships between the statutory agencies at local level.

County Louth was one of 29 locations to pilot the Joint Policing Committee initiative in 2006; which sought more involvement and collaboration between An Garda Síochána and other agencies to enhance quality of life and well being for local people across the county. Since then, under the leadership of Chief Superintendent Pat McGee, An Garda Síochána, despite the challenging economic conditions, has introduced many positive interventions to support local residents' capacity to live in a safe, secure environment.

The Peace Programme's fundamental objectives seek to challenge prejudice, value diversity, focus on reconciliation and contribute towards a shared society in the cross-border area. They resonate with the aims of the Community Safety Strategy: where a collaborative, action-based, problem-solving approach will facilitate more harmonious living environments for all citizens, regardless of cultural beliefs or values.

The process of developing a Community Safety Strategy has created the space - through intense consultation with statutory bodies, residents' groups, older people's groups, community and voluntary organisations, young people, Peace III target groups and elected Members - to crystallise the challenges that might undermine community cohesion in County Louth.

Many of the issues raised in the consultation will underpin the development of action plans for the area Joint Policing Committees, which are currently being established. The plans will reflect the uniqueness of our Border location, reinforce our partnership approach, and emphasise the lasting benefits created by the Peace Programme to secure a confident and inclusive society in the county.

We share a unity of purpose to ensure a peaceful, inclusive and confident society; creating a dynamic of trust and enabling stakeholders to engage meaningfully in anti-sectarian and anti-racism activities, where any legacy of fear or hurt can be reconciled in a meaningful way. With agencies working together alongside the community and voluntary sector, we will be in a position to respond effectively in a coherent and cohesive way to the Community Safety Strategy's vision. We are hopeful that our joint approach will inspire trust in people that there is a willingness to listen and to act to address the impact of crime, drugs and antisocial behaviour on the quality of life of all the citizens of County Louth.

The recent amended guidelines on the operation of Joint Policing Committees, issued by both Ministers of Justice and Environment, seek that Committees develop six year and annual strategies. The Community Safety Strategy for Louth has addressed these guidelines with a comprehensive six year strategic plan for the Louth Joint Policing Committees who will now proceed with its delivery.

**Joan Martin**

**Chief Executive**

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT

As the Chief Superintendent of An Garda Síochána for Louth Garda Division, I welcome the Community Safety Strategy for Co. Louth. It is a unique opportunity to strengthen the existing partnerships between the different statutory agencies in the county and the community.

Community safety or the perception of feeling safe in one's home and in a locality is one of the most critical indicators for residents to reflect their quality of life. Co. Louth and society in general has become more diverse in terms of ethnicity and its expression, and this can lead to fear of crime or racial abuse. Being a Border county also impacts to a significant degree on the feeling of safety, wellbeing and quality of life for those people who live in the northern portion of the county.

An Garda Síochána will play its part in improving the wellbeing and quality of life in Co. Louth by tackling anti-social behaviour, drugs and crime in general across the county. Enforcement of traffic regulations is also a key area to help reduce death and serious injury on our roads. Putting victims of crime to the forefront is a priority for An Garda Síochána.

No one agency or group has the solution to the issues arising on a daily basis. Agencies and other service providers and the public in general have to find ways to work closely together to achieve positive outcomes. We are entering into a new arrangement with new Joint Policing Committee guidelines, which seek to build upon positive partnerships to date. With genuine efforts by all concerned, it should lead to a better quality of life for the people of Co. Louth.

**Patrick D. McGee**

**Chief Superintendent**

# INTRODUCTION

## 1. COUNTY LOUTH: A SNAPSHOT

### 1.1

The 2011 census recorded the total population of Co Louth as 122,897; an increase of 10.45% since the 2006 census and considerably higher than the national average (8.22%)<sup>1</sup>. While Louth is considered to be the most prosperous of the southern border counties, it is also recognised that there are significant pockets of disadvantage in the county. 2011 figures show that Drogheda remains the largest town in the state with Dundalk coming a close second. A number of local authority estates in Dundalk and Drogheda are seriously disadvantaged on the basis of the Hasse Deprivation index; showing scores of 17.9-23.3 in Dundalk and -12 and -14 in Drogheda. There are higher than average levels of crime, substance misuse and anti-social behaviour in these locations. Some rural areas to the north and east of the county and areas close to the border have also been identified as isolated and deprived<sup>2</sup>.

### 1.2

Louth prospered during the boom years; with extensive infrastructural capital investment and development making it an ideal strategic location on the Dublin and Belfast economic corridor. Dundalk, Drogheda, Ardee and Dunleer became centres of activity and commerce. However, the county also suffered significantly as a result of the northern

conflict and its impact on commercial activity in these towns and inward investment to the county. This was noted by the business community during our consultations with them during the community safety strategy development phase.

### 1.3

2005 research<sup>3</sup> showed that Co Louth had the highest number of displaced people from the northern conflict with most of them settling in the larger urban areas, particularly Dundalk and in rural areas along the border. Displacement has been defined by the United Nations as a form of forced migration impelled by conflict, by groups of people inside the border of their country or across or near contested borders. This inward migration, as has been noted later in the Community Safety Strategy, brought a complex set of additional issues to estates, already disadvantaged and marginalised, and presents a separate set of challenges to the Joint Policing committee (JPC), partner agencies, and other service providers, as well as to local communities.

122,897

LOUTH POPULATION

8.22% higher than the national average (2011 Census)

### 1.4

A further factor which must be acknowledged is the increase in numbers of ethnic minority groups, who have carried their own conflicts with them, and other minority communities living in Co Louth. These communities have been a priority of PEACE III programme funding, which aims to help them build their capabilities and leadership skills, as well as equipping them and the communities where they have settled to deal with racist and sectarian attitudes. This has also had an impact on levels of crime and anti-social behaviour and requires innovative cross-sector responses to manage the consequent disaffection of communities resident in these areas.

### 1.5

The National Spatial strategy defines Co Louth as 'a rural area under strong urban influence' and highlights the fact that Dundalk, (the administrative capital of the county and a designated gateway city), Drogheda (a primary development centre), and Ardee and Dunleer (both areas with a more rural focus) will grow exponentially, based on commuter demand and their proximity to Dublin. This growth will transform the current social fabric and will present a variety of different challenges to the JPC from a policing and administrative perspective.

1 CSO 2011 census

2 Drumullagh, Creggan Upper; Kilanny; Clonkeen; Tallanstown and Kilcar. Deloitte MCS Ltd. Border Action: Thematic Review of Children and Young Persons' Projects. (2007).

3 All over the place: People Displaced to and from the Southern Border Counties as a Result of the Conflict 1969 – 1994. Ralaheen (2005).

## 2. COMMUNITY SAFETY IN COUNTY LOUTH

### 2.1

Community safety or the perception of feeling safe in a locality is one of the most critical indicators for residents in any area to reflect quality of life and wellbeing. More often than not, local communities acknowledge that their most significant concerns are those relating to safety and security and County Louth is no different. However where Louth markedly differentiates itself is its border county status, its long standing involvement with the Northern conflict and the repercussions of that conflict north and south of the border which undoubtedly impact on a feeling of safety, a sense of wellbeing and quality of life.

### 2.2

Ironically enough, concerns that people express about their personal safety and security have also inhibited local communities coming forward to assist in arriving at solutions to anti-social behaviour<sup>4</sup> due to fear, disillusionment, a sense of hopelessness and a lack of confidence in the system. They perceive that the statutory agencies need to respond in a more coherent manner to issues relating to criminality and anti-social behaviour. Consequently, building successful safer communities is about instilling a trust in people that agencies are prepared to listen, are willing to engage and are ready to act with them, and on their behalf, to combat anti-social behaviour and low level disorder. This presents significant challenges to all the partners working across the Louth local authority area, and particularly in its adjacent cross-border hinterland.



<sup>4</sup> Anti-social behaviour is less about a single action than an accumulation of a series of recurrent actions which have a detrimental effect upon people's quality of life. It can cover a wide range of behaviours and can be subjective. Where the victim and perpetrator live close by to one another, the intensity and frequency of incidents can often be unbearable for the victim. The Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act. Dublin (1997).

# INTRODUCTION

## 3. ENABLING COMMUNITIES

Establishing this mutual trust and respect between individuals, their communities, An Garda Síochána and other public bodies involves working from 'the top down' and the 'bottom up' simultaneously in order to make local areas safer places to live and work. It means having a policing service, similar to the current Louth community policing model that partners with communities and individuals to identify their needs; public agencies that listen and respond to what communities, families, victims and young people tell them about anti-social behaviour; local people who are not fearful of reprisal if they come forward, and a willingness from all the participants to share responsibility for tackling the problem. When communities are involved in making the decisions about their own areas, they can then begin to feel more confident about the steps that are being taken to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour. They are enabled to come together with others in their neighbourhoods to build trust, share values and agree what is acceptable behaviour<sup>5</sup>.

### 3.1 LOUTH PEACE AND RECONCILIATION PARTNERSHIP: ITS ROLE

'A peaceful, inclusive and confident community where fears and hurts have been reconciled and diverse cultures are appreciated' is the cornerstone of Co Louth's Peace and Reconciliation Partnership's vision for the cross-border area. That vision embraces two aims: challenging prejudice in order to build peace, and appreciating and valuing diversity. Implementing agreed community safety priorities in a targeted, collaborative way allows communities to focus on reconciliation and contribute towards a shared society in a structured mediated way.

### 3.2 THE PEACE PROGRAMME: ITS OBJECTIVES

Programme target groups to engage meaningfully in anti-sectarian and anti-racist work. They also aim to build and share learning in a 'safe' space to address sectarianism and racism while appreciating and valuing other cultures and supporting peace-building leadership across the county. These objectives embrace the fundamental tenets of a community safety strategy: where a 'safe' place can be created and facilitated for people of diverse cultural backgrounds and values to live their lives; work there or pass through as visitors.

### 3.3 STATUTORY STRUCTURES: THEIR ROLE

#### 3.3.1

County Louth was one of twenty nine locations to pilot the concept of Joint Policing Committees with the introduction of the Garda Síochána Act in 2005 which sought more involvement of Garda at local level with their communities. The subsequent establishment of the JPCs in 2006 and the setting-up of local community policing fora structures, led to a growing awareness about the need to support local residents' capacity to live in a safe, secure environment where their neighbourhoods benefit from reduced levels of crime.

<sup>5</sup> Ballymun Regeneration Ltd. Safer Ballymun: A Community Safety Strategy 2012-2016.



### 3.3.2

Within that framework, the then Drogheda Borough area initially established a forum comprising local and national elected members, senior members of An Garda Síochána, the Local Authority and the community and voluntary sector to improve conditions for local residents there. JPCs were subsequently established in Dundalk/ North Louth and Ardee/Mid-Louth to reflect the then local authority structure. The role of the JPCs has grown locally; engagement has expanded between the various stakeholders resulting in a more connected, focused approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour, low level disorder, racism and anti-sectarianism. A review of JPC terms of reference commenced in 2012 and following consultation with various stakeholders, including the public, revised recommendations were published in August 2014. These amended guidelines provide the terms of references for the operation of Joint Policing Committee structures.

### 3.4

A strategic priority identified in the Phase 11 action plan notes that the capacity of Peace 111 Target groups to engage without fear in wider societal and community activities needs to be nurtured, while ongoing projects within this phase have demonstrated the need for consistent engagement between Peace 111 target groups and existing statutory and non-statutory structures such as the JPCs; Drug Task Forces, the HSE, youth organisations, the community and voluntary sector, and communities themselves in order to encourage and sustain support for their efforts to tackle crime, low level disorder, racism and sectarianism.

### 3.4.1

To date, there has been considerable work done by the Co Louth Peace and Reconciliation Partnership in a series of wide ranging initiatives addressing its strategic priorities, and focusing on consolidating peace building among its target groups: young people, dealing with the repercussions of conflict amongst the 'displaced' and other residents; managing diversity and encouraging a more inclusive society through relationship building, and facilitating community dialogue<sup>6</sup>. These peace-building projects have been delivered in partnership by a number of agencies including Louth Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB), Louth County Enterprise Board; Louth Minority Ethnic consortium and a range of smaller initiatives.

# INTRODUCTION

## 3.5 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE: THEIR ROLE

The involvement of children and young people is critical in the implementation of any community safety strategy and the work that has been done with them already via peer leadership programmes, and creatively connecting through the arts and sport, has sown very positive seeds for future civic engagement. All of these initiatives have contributed towards a greater understanding of cultural diversity, managing conflict at local level and fostering a more inclusive society among the Peace 111 target groups, and they have been implemented in various local estates across the three JPC policing and RAPID areas. They have also enabled bonds to be forged between local residents and minority groups, encouraged new relationships north and south of the border, and provided a platform for future relationships to be established via a Community Safety Strategy, which will address local concerns and needs.

## 3.6

Apart from the learnings and outputs from the Louth Peace and Reconciliation forum, there are obvious merits to engaging in cross-border consultation with northern agency colleagues, who are already implementing Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs) across the 26 Council areas in the north, and who are dealing with similar issues, particularly across the sectarian divide. They provide a valuable point of reference in shaping a Community Safety Strategy for Louth<sup>7</sup>.

### 3.6.1

One outcome of the Peace 111 programme has shown that in order to bring all of this work to the next stage, and mindful of the individual diverse demands of the 3 JPC areas, there is a requirement for further cohesive engagement between Peace 111 target groups, local residents, and statutory agencies to work in partnership in a planned, co-ordinated way to ensure future sustainability and progress towards a lasting peace.

<sup>7</sup> Established under the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 to help make communities safer. It amalgamated the functions and responsibilities undertaken by District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) and Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs).



## 4. THE BRIEF

### 4.1

Our brief in developing this Community Safety strategy was to satisfy the focus of the PEACE III Programme priority which states: 'to build the capacity of PEACE III target Groups to engage without fear in wider societal and community activities' with the objective of providing a programme of work for the Louth Joint Policing Committee (JPC) to implement on a county wide basis.

### 4.2

In addressing this, we have done extensive research, undertaken a comprehensive community safety survey; consulted widely with statutory agencies, other service providers and groups, and spoken to many local people in urban and in rural areas throughout the county in the time allowed to us. We acknowledge the ideas, insights and constructive opinions offered by all the contributors.

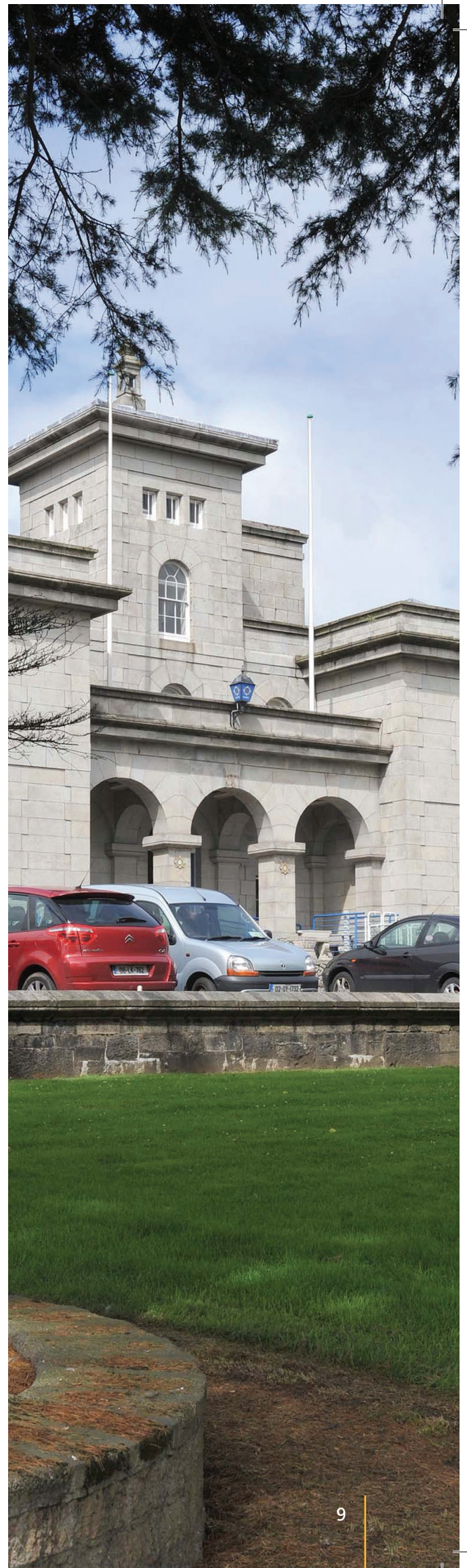
### NEXT STEPS

### 4.3

Given the unique circumstances and diverse societal conditions which frame Co Louth, providing an opportunity to develop a Community Safety strategy within the revised JPC guidelines shows a sense of common purpose. What is required of all the partners, in order to fulfil the strategy is a willingness to engage and a willingness to build trust, a resolve to communicate openly, to manage relationships respectfully and a resolve to support equal opportunity.

### 4.4

The Community Safety strategy will establish a link between all the points of existing activity/projects associated with RAPID, with PEACE III programme projects, and with the existing statutory structures; thus enabling a vehicle for change at grass roots level. It will ultimately affect an enhanced culture of listening and engagement, develop a mutual set of values and purpose, where there are strong agency and community partnerships and a shared experience; resulting in a better quality of life for local residents where they are engaged in shaping their futures; designing and standing witness to tangible solutions and positive outcomes: a peaceful, inclusive, and safe community.



# INTRODUCTION

## 5. THE CHALLENGE

We are conscious that the community safety strategy is being presented at a time of austerity in public sector finances. Throughout the consultation process, it has been generally recognised by both the statutory agencies, other organisations and the community that the economic recession has impacted on the provision of services. Delivery of a community safety strategy in this context will be a challenge, and will require creative and innovative use of existing resources with particular emphasis on best practice partnership models already operating within Louth County Council, e.g. with regard to addressing environmental management and anti-social behaviour, and in An Garda Síochána, combating crime and implementing the community policing plan. The strategic priorities and objectives highlighted in this strategy will focus on enabling effective intervention and a partnership approach, underpinned by the PEACE III ethos; to enhance the quality of life and well-being of citizens living in the county, and for those working and visiting in the county.

## 6. THE COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY CONSULTATION PROCESS

The consultation process for the development of the Community Safety Strategy took place July 2014 - September 2014. Our starting point was based on what had already been achieved by Louth Peace and Reconciliation Partnership and Louth Local Authorities in their previous engagement with the public on complex societal issues. In framing the consultation, we were mindful of the need to:

Develop a consultation framework that met the requirements of multiple stakeholders

Maximise the tools available for meaningful consultation in order to stimulate equally meaningful responses

Inspire trust and confidence in a partnership approach that will deliver tangible outcomes

'Listen' locally to harness the best of what already works

Appreciate and build on the extensive work undertaken by Co. Louth Peace and Reconciliation Partnership, Louth LA community development, the RAPID programme and other statutory and non-statutory stakeholders

Be grounded in international best practice and draw on learning and experience from both sides of the border

Leverage existing stakeholders and networks so as to maximise time and resources available

Enable individuals and organisations to ensure legacy and be a vehicle for the future to implement the safety strategy

Recognise that our differences are our most valuable assets and that the process created needed to find a shared and common understanding of what is possible in the future

Contribute to a Community Safety Strategy with clear and relevant objectives that have been discussed, debated, and accepted by the partners; with the reassurance that it will be monitored, evaluated, reviewed and developed as needs evolve

# INTRODUCTION

## 7. OUR FOCUS

### TWO DISTINCT ELEMENTS UNDERPINNED THE CONSULTATION:

#### 7.1

The development of a community safety survey targeted issues of concern to communities in general; local businesses and young people in the three JPC areas, in urban and rural areas throughout the county.

- The survey was posted on Louth Co Council's website and promoted via the local representatives, relevant departments within the Local Authority; An Garda Síochána; the community and voluntary sector; chambers of commerce; schools and third level institutions in the three JPC areas; residents' associations; local clergy; members of the legal profession; Peace and Reconciliation target groups; arts and cultural groups and non-Irish national communities.
- Hard copies of the survey were distributed to key stakeholders all over the county<sup>8</sup> by Louth Co Council officials, An Garda Síochána and the project team.
- It was accompanied by a statement issued to local media encouraging people to participate, as well as a media interview conducted on LMFM with the Peace and Reconciliation programme manager, who explained the rationale for the initiative and the nature of the survey.
- There were more than 1300 responses to the survey.





## 7.2

The second element of the process entailed direct stakeholder engagement with political representatives, local residents, agencies and other groups to listen to their concerns and elicit opinions on a community safety strategy.

- The total number of meetings conducted far exceeded our original proposal and numbered 35 in total.
- With the co-operation of the Louth Peace and Reconciliation Programme Manager and relevant Louth Co Council departments, Communiqué International developed a stakeholder data base and contacted each group to explain the objectives of the Community Safety Strategy. Surveys were issued to each one and they received a number of progress updates throughout the twelve week consultation period.
- We instigated a series of 1/1 agency<sup>8</sup> and other service provider stakeholder meetings which took place between June 2014 - September 2014.
- In addition, we engaged with a number of specific focus groups across the county, in the RAPID designated areas of Dundalk and Drogheda, older peoples' fora and young peoples' groups in the three JPC areas; local Chambers of Commerce in the three JPC areas; ethnic minority groups; service providers in the community and voluntary sector<sup>9</sup> to elicit their views about community safety, concerns that they had, and what initiatives they believed the JPC should implement in order to improve quality of life in their local areas. In order to engage most effectively with our cohort of young people, we used a graphic facilitator to communicate their concerns.<sup>10</sup>
- With the co-operation of the Local Authority, a series of special meetings was organised with local public representatives in each of the three JPC areas to brief them about the community safety survey campaign so that they could encourage residents at local level to participate. Local public representatives also voiced strongly-held views about community safety in the county and had a number of suggestions to make. Regular updates were issued to public representatives via e mail to keep them informed of progress.
- The Louth County Chief Superintendent and individual Garda superintendents also facilitated a number of meetings throughout the consultation.

# INTRODUCTION

## 8. THE COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY STRUCTURE

### 8.1

Having analysed the outcomes and findings of our research and consultation, it was decided to devise the community safety strategy around a number of interdependent themes, which by their nature would address the needs of certain PEACE Programme III target groups, the general public, those affected by substance misuse, younger people, older people and other marginalised groups in the county.

### 8.2

The strategy consists of a vision, mission and five high level goals. Each goal has a number of strategic priorities which, more often than not, have a longer term outcome. They are followed by a series of short to medium term objectives under three broad headings. An additional heading - Environment and Quality of life - is provided in the community theme.

01

ENFORCEMENT

02

COMMUNICATION  
ADVOCACY  
&  
AWARENESS

03

EDUCATION

As these issues have a common identity across the three JPC areas, we have avoided proposing specific actions. Individual actions should ideally be agreed by the relevant stakeholders in each area. Instead we provide a proposed action plan template to be agreed and populated by the JPC, once the strategy has been adopted.

The background of the page features a silhouette of a person standing on a structure, possibly a bridge or a tower, against a bright, hazy sky at sunset or sunrise. The person is holding onto a vertical post. The overall scene is dark, with the sky providing a warm, golden light. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent yellow rectangular area.

### 8.3 IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE STRATEGY

Following a review of the JPC structure initiated in 2012, and input received by the Department of Justice during the public consultation prior to the preparation of the White Paper on Crime, a number of significant changes were made to the JPC guidelines<sup>12</sup> to reflect the new local government arrangements and a strengthening of strategic and collaborative functions within the JPC.

#### 8.3.1

The new guidelines indicate that the JPC will operate at a city and county level following the abolition of the Town Councils. Committees will be asked to develop 6 year strategic plans as well as annual programmes of work and report on their implementation in Annual Reports. The number of community representatives - a recurring theme in the Louth community safety strategy consultations - will be increased; and the need for a comprehensive communications strategy to support the interaction between local communities and statutory partners and other local structures was also emphasised in the guidelines.

The Louth Community Safety strategy's goals and objectives targeting the specific needs of north, mid and south Louth are a timely intervention therefore, and will form the basis of a programme of work for the County Louth Joint Policing Committee in the short, medium and longer term. Key performance indicators with localised actions will be agreed at JPC level and will be reported on and monitored at meetings of area policing committees for north, mid and south Louth, and on an annual basis to the county-wide Steering Committee of the JPC.

<sup>12</sup> JPC revised guidelines August 2014.

# COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY





## OUR VISION

Louth will be a county where all of its citizens can lead safe, peaceful lives and experience a good quality of life and well-being.

## OUR MISSION

The Louth Community Safety Strategy will inform the Joint Policing Committee's programme of work over the next three years.

It outlines themes and goals with associated strategic priorities and objectives which will enhance the quality of life of citizens living, working and visiting in the county.

It will be implemented through the combined efforts of the relevant statutory agencies, associated service providers and communities across the county.

## OUR APPROACH

Our approach is governed by a set of principles which will support delivery of the strategy:

- Strategic
- Partnership-based
- People-focused
- Locally delivered

## OUR THEMES

- 1 Building Safer Communities
- 2 Tackling Alcohol and Substance Misuse
- 3 Nurturing Children and Young People
- 4 Supporting Older and Vulnerable People
- 5 Encouraging Integrated Communities

# THEME 1: BUILDING SAFER COMMUNITIES

## GOAL

Citizens in County Louth will live safely and peacefully in an inclusive environment and benefit from reduced levels of crime, intimidation, or anti-social behaviour.

### THE ROLE OF THE JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE (JPC): WHAT IT CAN DO

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- 1 Ensure that adequate structures, appropriate representation and sufficient resources are in place to implement a county-wide community safety strategy
- 2 Work collaboratively to reduce serious crime and its impact across the county.
- 3 Reduce the risk of anti-social behaviour in our neighbourhoods, rural communities and town centres, and particularly in PEACE III target areas and other areas of social disadvantage and deprivation.
- 4 Encourage a sense of community capital, ownership and civic participation in communities across the county with an emphasis on PEACE III target groups, non-Irish nationals and other ethnic minorities.



# THEME 1: BUILDING SAFER COMMUNITIES

## OBJECTIVES

### ENFORCEMENT

The JPC aims to:

- Continue to implement the national community policing model at local level.
- Develop a means to identify priority locations/hotspots for resource requirements, based on anti-crime incidence and evidence of need.
- Undertake a needs-based analysis to assess the requirement for a community coordinator for the JPC areas in north, south and mid-Louth.
- Ensure effective enforcement of local authority and Garda public order and traffic legislation.
- Implement agreed cross-border policing mechanisms to address crime and anti-social behaviour in border areas.
- Undertake an analysis of crime figures in relation to older people to address the perception of crime and alleviate the 'fear' factor.
- Work with statutory agencies and service providers to safeguard the welfare of individuals and families at risk.
- Ensure that An Garda Síochána and other statutory providers continue to implement victim-centred policy
- Work with education providers and the Probation Service to support a policy of early intervention to reduce the risk of young people engaging with the justice system.<sup>13</sup>

### ENVIRONMENT AND QUALITY OF LIFE

The JPC aims to:

- Facilitate collaboration between partner agencies to encourage strategic allocation of housing tenancies.
- Support an appropriate residential referral process to address local requirements.
- Promote the enforcement role of the PRTB<sup>14</sup> and other agencies to support good estate management practice in private rented accommodation.
- Work with partner organisations and homeless services to meet the essential housing and support needs of the homeless population.
- Partner with local communities and businesses to create safer local areas and shared public spaces.
- Work with partner agencies to support older and other vulnerable people to feel safer in their communities.<sup>15</sup>
- Support existing agencies and community organisations in their work to reduce levels of substance misuse and its impact on communities.<sup>16</sup>
- Promote a clean local environment to cultivate pride of place and community ownership.

<sup>13</sup> Strategic priority: Young people

<sup>14</sup> Private Rented Tenants' Board

<sup>15</sup> Strategic priority: Older people

<sup>16</sup> Strategic priority: Substance misuse



# THEME 1: BUILDING SAFER COMMUNITIES

## COMMUNICATION, ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS

The JPC aims to:

- Advocate for additional Garda and local authority resources to support evidence-based need, and for the support of older people.
- Create opportunities for enhanced engagement between statutory agencies and local communities.
- Work to improve the perception of community safety among local communities.
- Initiate a dialogue process to address rural isolation and loneliness.
- Advocate for legislative and judicial reform to ensure more consistent sentencing policies and early and/or temporary release schemes.
- Encourage a clearly defined and shared sense of the contribution of different individuals and communities to local neighbourhoods.

## EDUCATION AND PREVENTION

The JPC aims to:

- Encourage specialist training for An Garda Síochána and other statutory agencies in the area of sexual offences and domestic violence.
- Embed the value of education and employment to society through encouraging education, community and sport programmes and parenting courses.

# THEME 2: TACKLING ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE MISUSE

## GOAL

We will work with existing agencies and their partners to reduce the impact of alcohol, substance misuse and drug-related crime on communities in Co Louth.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- 1 Consideration should be given in a revised JPC structure to reflect representation of the NERDTF, members of the DDAG, DDAN<sup>17</sup> and statutory and community and voluntary sector partners in Drogheda and Dundalk.<sup>18</sup>
- 2 Develop a county-wide substance misuse and detoxification strategy in collaboration with other statutory organisations.
- 3 Develop and implement a county-wide community alcohol strategy.

<sup>17</sup> Dependant on its current status

<sup>18</sup> Eligibility for membership should become clearer with the formal constitution of the LCDC and the PPN

# THEME 2: TACKLING SUBSTANCE AND ALCOHOL MISUSE

## OBJECTIVES

### ENFORCEMENT

The JPC aims to:

- Advocate for legislative and judicial reform to ensure more consistent sentencing policies and early and/or temporary release schemes.
- Develop a consistent policing policy in relation to alcohol sales and consumption.
- Liaise with license holders on the sale and supply of alcohol to intoxicated persons.
- Enforce the law regarding the sale, supply or delivery of alcohol to minors with particular emphasis on age verification.
- Work with the 3 local area JPCs to enforce relevant by-laws.
- Implement the 'Test Purchasing of Alcohol' Scheme in all local areas.
- Work with local retail outlets to develop a voluntary code of conduct in relation to alcohol.
- Continue to enforce compliance with the agreed code of practice on the sale and display of alcohol in mixed trading premises.
- Work with local retail outlets and the Taxi Federation to develop an agreed code re sales and deliveries at local level.
- Collaborate with authorities in the North to reduce cross-border drugs and alcohol smuggling.
- Implement protocols to deal with drug-related intimidation, anti-social behaviour and drug dealing.

### COMMUNICATION, ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS RAISING

The JPC aims to:

- Advocate with the LA Planning Department so that locations of licensed premises are specified in individual area plans.
- Advocate for reform of the current legislation on alcohol i.e. curtailing home alcohol deliveries; introduction of minimum pricing; reducing sports sponsorships.
- Inform the public on the methods and grounds for objecting to the granting or renewal of liquor licences.
- Advocate with policy makers nationally and locally to ensure a regulated treatment service for unregulated residential service providers and ensure that they are monitored regularly.
- Advocate for the provision of appropriate treatment in accessible locations that respects the dignity of the person.
- Advocate for increased resources for the provision of front-line addiction services, particularly in the u18 youth category.
- Advocate for an increase in numbers of GPs prescribing methadone county-wide.
- Publicise information on alcohol treatment and rehabilitation services.
- Promote a county-side community-based approach to alcohol and benzodiazepine treatment services.
- Examine the possibility of establishing a County Louth JPC website where an evidence-based social marketing approach can be taken in relation to alcohol and substance misuse prevention programmes<sup>19</sup>.
- Link this website to [www.drugs.ie](http://www.drugs.ie) and to [www.alcoholireland.ie](http://www.alcoholireland.ie).

<sup>19</sup> Recommendation 12 National Steering group report on Alcohol and Substance Misuse



## EDUCATION AND PREVENTION

The JPC aims to:

- Implement the Probation Service Alcohol and Offending Programme (incorporating a treatment referral option) for offenders and those who are in Garda/Probation Service care, due to behaviour caused by harmful use of alcohol.
- Ensure that responsible server training is provided to all alcohol outlets.
- Ensure that all statutory service providers' review their substance misuse policies and prioritise their implementation.
- Ensure that effective substance misuse education and information programmes are in place in all schools and third level institutions, youth organisations, sporting organisations and workplaces in the county.
- Ensure that community health promotion programmes are supported.
- Continue to implement an alcohol/drugs intervention programme aimed at youth at risk including the Special Projects for Youth, Garda Juvenile Diversion Programme and the Garda Youth Diversion projects.
- Work with relevant agencies to provide alcohol and drug-free youth cafes and 'hangouts' that are inclusive, culturally sensitive and multilingual with weekend and late night opening in the three JPC local areas.
- Support the implementation of education and behavioural training for all stakeholders working in the substance misuse arena.

# THEME 3: NURTURING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

## GOAL

Children and young people will lead fulfilled lives in safe, peaceful and confident communities.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- 1 Work in partnership to ensure that young people engage positively with the justice system.
- 2 Support the provision of safe, friendly, alcohol and drug-free recreational spaces with adequate facilities and appropriate opening times, where children and young people can gather in an inclusive, safe and positive way.
- 3 Work collaboratively to ensure that early intervention policies are delivered through local partnerships at community level.

## OBJECTIVES

### ENFORCEMENT

The JPC aims to:

- Work in partnership to divert children and young people from anti-social and destructive behaviour.
- Support An Garda Síochána in the delivery of the Garda Youth Diversionary projects and engage with young offenders and their families.
- Work with the Probation Service and An Garda Síochána to promote restorative justice practice at local level to challenge offending behaviour in young people.
- Support An Garda Síochána and the Local Authority to enforce public drinking legislation, combat open drug dealing and selling/purchasing alcohol/drugs to minors.

### COMMUNICATION, ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS

The JPC aims to:

- Facilitate the representation of children and young people within the JPC structure.
- Work with partners to ensure that dedicated youth development workers are assigned to areas of most need.
- Seek the views of young people involved in the youth justice system to enhance local delivery of national aims.
- Communicate and build trust where young people believe they can confide/report anti social behaviour or crime without fear of reprisal.

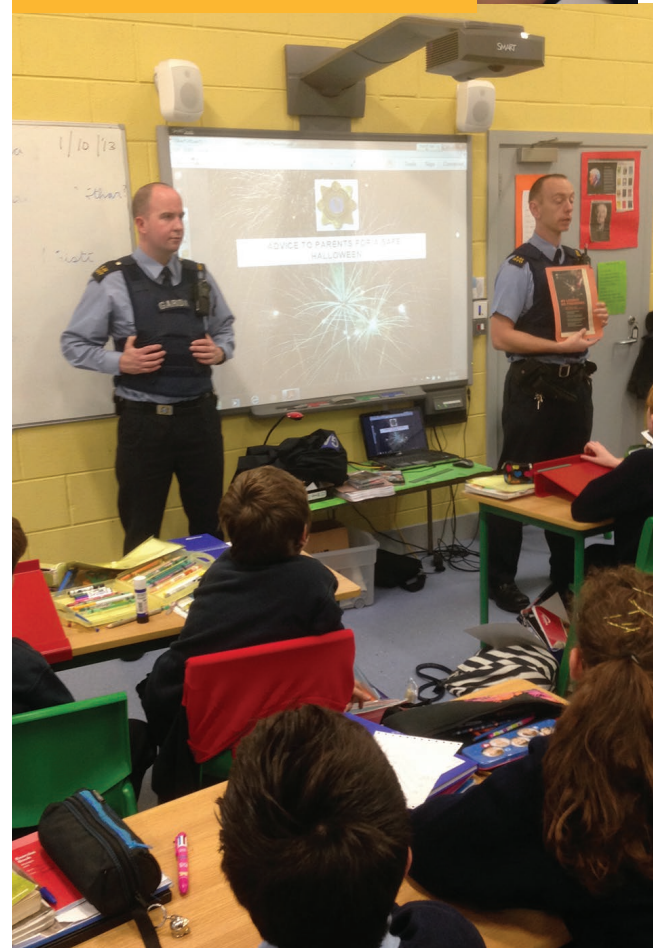


# THEME 3: NURTURING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

## EDUCATION AND PREVENTION

The JPC aims to:

- Continue to build relationships with local schools so that young people have access to relevant peer education programmes and other interventions.
- Highlight parenting skills programmes and workshops aimed at educating parents and guardians on drug and alcohol issues affecting young people via existing mechanisms and other providers. Eg. Strengthening Families Programme.
- Using a cross-agency approach encourage responsible, inclusive, inter-generational relationship-building.
- Promote safe use of parks, playgrounds and open spaces through encouraging young people to participate in multi-disciplinary initiatives.
- Work together to secure more appropriate outcomes for young people before the Courts at local level, particularly where the primary issue is one of the care and welfare of the young person.



# THEME 4: SUPPORTING OLDER & VULNERABLE PEOPLE

## GOAL

Older and vulnerable people will feel respected and safe within their communities and enabled to access necessary services.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- 1 Support the implementation of the Louth Age Friendly strategy.
- 2 Continue to implement An Garda Síochána's Older People's safety strategy in collaboration with the relevant partners.





## THEME 4: SUPPORTING OLDER AND VULNERABLE PEOPLE

### OBJECTIVES

#### ENFORCEMENT

The JPC aims to:

- Work to protect older and vulnerable people from crime and anti-social behaviour in rural and border areas.
- Implement a text alert system and/or Neighbourhood Watch system throughout the county.
- Support an environment where older peoples' sense of security is enhanced.
- Encourage communities to foster a spirit of checking and monitoring on their older and more vulnerable neighbours.

#### COMMUNICATION, ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS

The JPC aims to:

- Advocate for older people 'to get out and about' through the provision of safe, accessible, affordable, and flexible transport systems in both rural and urban areas.
- Continue to address the problem of elder abuse at all levels of society through raising awareness, improving reporting rates and advocating for improved services.

#### EDUCATION AND PREVENTION

The JPC aims to:

- Promote intergenerational programmes in communities, youth programmes and schools to build more positive inter-community relationships.
- Initiate a series of preventative programmes enhancing older peoples' safety based on the northern model.



# THEME 5: ENCOURAGING INTEGRATED COMMUNITIES

## GOAL

We will foster and support peaceful and safe community co-existence, where new and existing residents adapt to one another and to their local areas, within a shared set of values and purpose.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- 1 Work in partnership in a systemic way to build a peaceful, safe, inclusive and cohesive society that is tolerant and respectful of diversity.
- 2 Ensure that there is adequate representation of ethnic minority groupings and other PEACE III target groups within the JPC structure.
- 3 Continue to build cultural and attitudinal change through working with the relevant agencies to sustain the PEACE III initiatives and programmes where appropriate.



# THEME 5: ENCOURAGING INTEGRATED COMMUNITIES

## OBJECTIVES

### ENFORCEMENT

The JPC aims to:

- Support An Garda Síochána to implement the Garda Diversity Strategy and implementation plan at local level.
- Work with other service providers to facilitate the continued implementation of the Louth Anti-racism and Diversity Plan.
- Support the work of the statutory partners and other organisations in reducing the stigmatisation of street homelessness as potential threats to community safety.
- Support the work of the statutory partners and other organisations to reduce homelessness and hidden homelessness, its impacts and effects.
- Take appropriate measures to reduce racist crime, hate crime and discrimination
- Support victims of intimidation or threat.

### COMMUNICATION, ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS

The JPC aims to:

- Further develop cross border strategic partnerships, exchanges and ways of working.
- Ensure that all citizens can avail of public services and facilities without fear of bias.
- Consult with diverse and minority groups to inform future policy initiatives.
- Work to promote trust with those who bear the legacy of conflict.

### EDUCATION AND PREVENTION

The JPC aims to:

- Address sectarianism, stigmatisation and racism at local level through targeted programmes and shared learning experiences.
- Encourage local schools to develop integration initiatives and celebrate diversity.
- Ensure that diversity training is adopted by statutory agencies and other service providers.



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Comhairle Contae Lú  
Louth County Council

**Louth County Council**

County Hall Millennium Centre Dundalk County Louth

**t** +353 (0) 42 9335457 **e** info@louthcoco.ie

**w** www.louthcoco.ie

