

19th November, 2015

Deputy Frances Fitzgerald TD,
Minister for Justice & Equality,
Department of Justice & Equality,
94 St Stephen's Green,
Dublin 2.
D02 FD 70

REF: 46829

RE: Clondalkin Area Committee Meeting of South Dublin County Council held on 18th November, 2015.

Dear Minister,

At the meeting of the Clondalkin Area Committee held on 18th November, 2015 the following motion was passed by the Members:

"That this committee agrees with Rathcoole Community Council in saying that the station in Rathcoole is understaffed and calls for more gardai and patrols are needed to stem the number of burglaries and break-ins especially as we go into Christmas and the dark evenings and we ask that the Minister for Justice be written to and asked to urgently review this unacceptable situation."

I would be obliged for your comments and responses as soon as possible to enable me to revert to the Committee.

Yours sincerely,


Breda Clifford,

Staff Officer,
Operations,
Environment Water & Climate Change



AN ROINN DLÍ AGUS CIRT AGUS COMHIONANNAIS
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND EQUALITY

Ms Breda Clifford
Staff Officer, Operations
Environment, Water and Climate Change
South Dublin County Council
County Hall
Tallaght
Dublin 24

D24 YNN5

Minister's reference: 1125150512
Council's reference: 46829

Environment Water & Climate Change

- 1 JUN 2016

Re: Motion passed at meeting on 18 November 2015 of Clondalkin Area Committee (South Dublin County Council)

30 May 2016

Dear Ms Clifford,

I am directed by the Tánaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality, Ms Frances Fitzgerald TD, to refer to your letter concerning the motion referred to above. The motion concerns resources allocated to Rathcoole Garda Station.

The Tánaiste is acutely aware of the policing issues faced by communities across the country, and in this regard she is committed to ensuring that An Garda Síochána continue to provide an effective, efficient and professional policing service, appropriate to the needs of twenty-first century Ireland. Under the Garda Síochána Acts it is the Garda Commissioner who is responsible for the distribution of all resources—including personnel—among the various Garda Divisions, and the Tánaiste has no direct role in the matter. This allocation of resources is constantly monitored in the context of crime trends, policing needs and various operational strategies in place on District, Divisional and Regional levels to ensure optimum use is made of Garda resources and the best possible Garda service is provided to the public.

Rathcoole Garda Station is in Clondalkin Garda District, which forms part of the Dublin Metropolitan Region (DMR) West Division. As with all other Garda Divisions, the deployment of members of An Garda Síochána and of the Garda Reserve in DMR West is considered as part of a distribution model that takes into account all relevant factors such as crime trends, demography and security assessments. The Divisional Officer for each Garda Division allocates personnel within his or her Division as appropriate. There are currently 686 members of An Garda Síochána assigned to DMR West, supported by 46 members of the Garda Reserve and 44.2 full-time equivalent (FTE) civilian staff. In Clondalkin Garda District alone there are 192 Gardaí, supported by 4 members of the Garda reserve and 12.5 FTE civilian staff. When appropriate, the work of Divisional Gardaí is supported by a number of Garda national units such as the National Bureau of Criminal Investigation (NBCI), the Garda Bureau of Fraud Investigation (GBFI) and the Garda National Immigration Bureau

(GNIB).

More generally with regard to Garda numbers, the Garda authorities advise that since the Garda College reopened in September 2014, a total of 395 Garda trainees have attested as members of An Garda Síochána. On attestation, new Probationer Gardaí are allocated to Garda stations around the country, where they are assigned to mainstream policing duties. The Garda authorities further advise that the needs of all Garda Divisions are fully considered when determining the allocation of members; for example, last year alone 35 new Gardaí were assigned to the aforementioned DMR West Division. With regard to future requirements, a further 450 new Gardaí will be recruited in 2016; this will bring to 1,150 the total number of Garda trainees who will have been recruited since September 2014. It is anticipated that a further 395 will attest by the end of 2016 which, taking account of projected retirements, will bring Garda numbers to approximately 13,000. Recruitment is expected to continue at around the current levels having regard to factors such as the level of retirements in any one year.

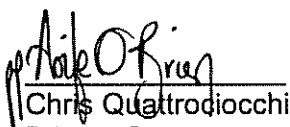
While recruiting extra Gardaí is necessary, it is not sufficient, and for this reason the Government has introduced its Capital Plan 2016–2021. Over the six-year period of the Capital Plan the Government will invest over €205 million in Garda ICT systems and €46 million on new and upgraded Garda vehicles. This increase in investment will enhance the mobility, visibility and operational responsiveness of An Garda Síochána, on the roads and in the wider community.

From an operational perspective, Operation Thor was launched in 2015 by the Garda Commissioner. Operation Thor is a multi-strand, national anti-crime operation, in support of which an extra allocation of over €5 million has been committed. Operation Thor entails a broad range of activities to tackle crime, particularly burglaries, in urban and rural communities nationwide. Since Operation Thor commenced, there has been a range of arrests and persons charged as part of planned operations. Such operations include additional high-visibility patrols in identified burglary hot-spots, increased use of checkpoints to tackle the criminal gangs using the national road network, the use of new high-powered vehicles by the armed Regional Response Units, efforts to disrupt the stolen goods market, programmes to help reduce re-offending by prolific offenders, a high profile national crime prevention awareness campaign, targeted crime prevention advice for local communities and enhanced supports for victims.

With regard to the legislative framework, the Criminal Justice (Burglary of Dwellings) Act 2015 (Act No. 56 of 2015) was signed into law on 24 December 2015. This Act aims to tackle persistent offenders charged with multiple offences of burglary of homes. It enhances the provisions for refusal of bail in appropriate cases and provides for consecutive sentencing for repeat offenders.

I hope that the foregoing information is of assistance to you and to the Clondalkin Area Committee of South Dublin County Council.

Yours sincerely



Chris Quattrodiocchi
Private Secretary to the Tánaiste and
Minister for Justice and Equality