Barbara Reilly

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Ministers Ref: 1017120517

22 December 2016

Dear Ms Reilly,

I am directed by the Tánaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality to

refer to your email dated 14 October 2016 regarding Garda resources in

Lucan and Ronanstown.

This Government is committed to ensuring a strong and visible police

presence throughout the country in order to maintain and strengthen

community engagement, provide reassurance to citizens and deter crime.

To make this a reality for all, the Government has in place a plan to

achieve an overall Garda workforce of 21,000 personnel by 2021

comprising 15,000 Garda members, 2,000 Reserve members and 4,000

civilians. In 2017, funding has been provided for the recruitment of 800

Garda recruits and up to 500 civilians to support the wide ranging

reform plan in train in An Garda Síochána. 300 appointments will also

be made to the Garda Reserve.

By way of background, the Garda Commissioner is responsible for the

distribution of resources, including personnel, among the various Garda

Divisions and the Tánaiste has no direct role in the matter.

As you will be aware Lucan and Ronanstown Garda Stations form the Lucan

Garda District in the Dublin Metropolitan Region (DMR) West Division. As

of 31 October 2016, the latest date for which figures are available, the

personnel strength of Lucan and Ronanstown Garda Stations are 74 and 90

respectively, and the D.M.R. West Garda Division has a total strength of

672. There are also 34 Garda Reserves, 56 Community Gardaí and 48

Civilians attached to the Division. When appropriate, the work of local

Gardaí is supported by a number of Garda national units such as the

National Bureau of Criminal Investigation, the Garda National Economic

Crime Bureau and the Garda National Drugs and Organise Crime Bureau.

I am informed by the Garda Commissioner that since the reopening of the

Garda College, 679 recruits have attested as members of An Garda

Síochána of whom 63 have been assigned to the DMR West Division.

The Government's plan for an overall Garda workforce of 21,000 is

complemented by substantial investment in resources across the board for

An Garda Síochána. Significant resources that have been made available

to An Garda Síochána under the Government's Capital Plan 2016 - 2021.

In particular, some €205 million in additional funding for Garda ICT and

€46 million for new Garda vehicles has been allocated over the lifetime

of the plan.

This investment will facilitate the provision of more effective policing

services and it is expected that the DMR West Division, like all other

Garda Divisions will benefit from these new resources becoming

available.

Operation Thor represents a carefully considered strategy which was

developed after the Tánaiste initiated a broad review of our approach to

burglary crime in the early part of last year and is now supporting a

concerted drive against those involved in burglary crime. Operation Thor

has led to concentrated Garda activity with more than 30,000 crime

prevention patrols and in the order of 38,500 targeted checkpoints

nationwide. There have also been in the region of 2,500 arrests and

2,900 charges covering a range of offences which, in addition to

burglary have included handling stolen property, possession of firearms

and drugs offences.

While we must continue to be vigilant, the latest CSO crime figures

continue to show a very significant decline in property related crime,

particularly burglary. This underlines the success that An Garda

Síochána is having in combating property crime through the targeted

strategy which is being implemented under Operation Thor. The decrease

in burglary for the twelve months ending 30 June 2016 is 26.3% compared

to the previous twelve-month period. There are also welcome decreases of

12.3% for theft and 11.1% for robbery during the same period.

I am advised that Garda management in the Lucan District have

implemented a number of ongoing measures to prevent and detect crime

against persons and property increased which have resulted in a

significant reduction in burglaries year to date in comparison to the

same period last year.

The Tánaiste is fully aware of the policing issues faced by communities

in all parts of 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.

I hope that the foregoing information is of assistance.

Yours Sincerely,

Niall Colgan,

Private Secretary to the Tánaiste

and Minister for Justice and Equality