

OIFIG AN TÁNAISTE AGUS AIRE DLÍ AGUS CIRT AGUS COMHIONANNAIS
OFFICE OF THE TÁNAISTE AND MINISTER FOR JUSTICE AND EQUALITY

Edwina Leonard
Housing Administration
South Dublin County Council
County Hall
Town Centre
Tallaght
Dublin 24



Ministers Ref: 0127114836

3 April
March 2017

Dear Ms Leonard,

I am directed by the Tánaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality, Ms Frances Fitzgerald, I refer to your letter dated 23/01/2017 regarding Garda Resources in Tallaght.

You will appreciate that under the Garda Síochána Acts, the Commissioner is responsible for the distribution of resources, including Community Gardaí, among the various Garda Divisions and the Minister has no direct role in the matter. Garda management keeps this distribution of resources under continual review in the context of crime trends and policing priorities so as to ensure that the optimum use is made of these resources.

The Minister is informed by the Garda Commissioner that the Tallaght District forms part of the Dublin Metropolitan Region (D.M.R.) South Division and that the Garda Strength of the D.M.R. South Division on 28 February 2017, the latest date for which figures are readily available, was 553 members of whom 249 were assigned to the Tallaght District. There are also 4 Garda Reserves and 12 civilians attached to the Tallaght District. In addition, support is provided by the Divisional Traffic Corp, Regional Support Unit, Divisional Drugs Unit and Detective Units which are regularly detailed for duty in the area concerned.

The Minister is further informed by the Garda Authorities that the allocation of Garda vehicles is monitored and reviewed on a continual basis and vehicles are allocated between districts as required by operational circumstances.

The Government's Capital Plan 2016 – 2021 provides a significant investment of some €46million in the Garda Fleet to ensure that An Garda Síochána has

a modern, effective and fit for purpose fleet. Over 520 new vehicles were purchased and allocated for use in 2016 alone. In addition, some 200 vehicles were purchased for allocation and use in 2017. This will be supplemented by funding of some €4 million which is available for new vehicles in 2017.

The investment in the Garda fleet will continue to provide An Garda Síochána with additional high-powered vehicles, marked and unmarked patrol cars, and motorcycles to ensure that Gardaí can be mobile, visible and responsive on the roads and in the community to prevent and tackle crime.

Community policing is at the heart of An Garda Síochána. It provides a means of recognising that every community – both urban and rural – has its own concerns and expectations. In this regard I welcome the strong emphasis placed by the Commissioner's Modernisation and Renewal Programme 2016-2021 on further developing and supporting the community policing ethos of the organisation so that Gardaí spend more time in the community, gaining public confidence and trust and providing a greater sense of security. Proposed initiatives include the establishment of local Community Policing Teams (CPTs) headed by an Inspector and made up of Gardaí from across a range of areas to proactively work with the community to prevent and detect crime; and the establishment of Community Safety Fora in every District comprising local Gardaí, local communities and key stakeholders.

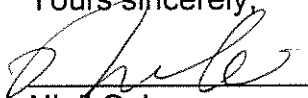
This Government is committed to ensuring a strong and visible police presence throughout the country in order to maintain and strengthen community engagement, provide reassurance to citizens and deter crime. To make this a reality for all, the Government has in place a plan to achieve an overall Garda 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. Funding has also been provided for the recruitment of 300 Garda Reserves.

Since the reopening of the Garda College in September 2014, 839 recruits have attested as members of An Garda Síochána and have been assigned to mainstream duties nationwide. I am also informed by the Commissioner that another 750 trainee Garda are scheduled to attest this year which will see Garda numbers, taking account of projected retirements, increase to around the 13,500 mark by year end.

This focus on investment in personnel is critical. The moratorium on recruitment introduced in 2010 resulted in a significant reduction in the strength of An Garda Síochána. We are now rebuilding the organisation and providing the Commissioner with the resources she needs to allow her to deploy increasing numbers of Gardaí across every Garda Division including Community Gardaí in the coming years.

I hope that the foregoing information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Niall Colgan', written over a horizontal line.

Niall Colgan

Private Secretary to the
Minister for Justice and Equality