Email received 11th June 2018

Ministers ref: 0123144346

Re: Garda resources in Tallaght

Dear Ms Leonard,

I am directed by the Minister for Justice and Equality Charlie Flanagan T.D., to refer to your correspondence dated 19 January 2018 regarding Garda resources in Tallaght.

As you will appreciate, it is the Garda Commissioner who is responsible for the distribution of resources, including personnel, 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 area referred to forms part of the Dublin Metropolitan Region South Division and the Commissioner advises that on the 30 April 2018, the latest date for which figures are readily available, the strength of the D.M.R. South Division was 532, of whom 239 are assigned to the Tallaght District. 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 Organised Crime Bureau.

The Commissioner has further advised that local Garda Management closely monitor patrols, and other operational strategies in the Tallaght District, in conjunction with crime trends and policing needs of the local community to ensure optimum use is made of the Garda resources, and the best possible Garda service is provided to the public.

The 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 to deter crime.

The substantial increase in Garda numbers is tangible progress on achieving the Government’s vision of an overall Garda workforce of 21,000 personnel by 2021 comprising 15,000 Garda members, 2,000 Reserve members and 4,000 civilians.

Since the reopening of the Garda College in September 2014, close to 1,800 recruits have attested as members of An Garda Síochána and have been assigned to mainstream duties nationwide, 51 of whom have been assigned to the Tallaght District. Garda numbers, taking account of retirements, increased to 13,551 at the end of 2017 - a net increase of over 600 since the end of 2016.

Funding is in place to maintain this high level of investment in the Garda workforce to ensure that the vision of an overall workforce of 21,000 by

2021 remains on track. This year a further 800 new Garda Recruits will enter the Garda College; some 400 of whom have already done so. In total,

800 Garda trainees are scheduled to attest during the year, some 200 of whom attested in March. Further, Garda numbers, taking account of projected retirements, are on track to reach 14,000 by the end of this year.

In addition, a further 500 civilians will also be recruited to fill critical skills gaps across the organisation and to facilitate the redeployment of Gardaí from administrative and technical duties to front-line operational duties. There are plans to strengthen the Garda Reserve with new Reserves expected to commence training in 2018.

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 needed to deploy increasing numbers of Gardaí across every Garda Division and District, including the Tallaght District, in the coming years.

Very significant resources have been provided to An Garda Síochána, including an overtime allocation of almost €100 million announced in Budget 2018, to support large-scale policing operations including Operation Thor.

The scale of Garda activity against burglary and property-related crime under Operation Thor has led to concentrated Garda activity. As of 17 May 2018, 130,702 targeted checkpoints and 151,819 crime prevention patrols have been conducted nationwide. To give you an idea of the impact of the Operation, I can inform you that this concentrated policing activity has produced in the region of 7,659 arrests and 8,613 charges covering a range of offences which, in addition to burglary, include handling stolen property, possession of firearms and drugs offences.

The Government's Capital Plan 2016 – 2021 provides for significant resourcing of An Garda Síochána. Some €46million was allocated for investment in the Garda fleet to ensure that An Garda Síochána has a modern, effective and fit for purpose fleet. This is in addition to the investment of almost €30 million in the fleet in the period 2013 to 2015.

In total in the period 2013 to end of 2017 almost €44 million will have been invested in the fleet.

It is expected that these new resources coming on stream will benefit all Garda activity and increase Garda visibility in all Divisions including the D.M.R. South Division.

I hope this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

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Conor Cleary

Private Secretary to the

Minister for Justice and Equality

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