

An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt  
Department of Justice

Oifig an Aire | Office of the Minister

**Housing Department**

22 NOV 2023



Ms. Fiona Hendley  
South Dublin County Council  
County hall Town Centre  
Tallaght  
Dublin 24

20th November 2023

**Minister's Reference: DJE-MO-09299-2023**

Dear Ms. Hendley,

Thank you for your letter, dated 10 October 2023, regarding the future of the Community Policing and Drugs Unit in Tallaght Garda Station and other Garda Stations.

The Government is committed to building stronger, safer communities - in our towns and cities and across rural Ireland. Everybody has the right to feel safe and to be safe in their homes and on their land and property.

I am advised that, as of 30 September 2023 (the latest date for when figures are available), Tallaght District had 266 Garda members of all ranks assigned which is an increase of over 11% since the end of 2017 when there were 239 Garda members assigned to the District. As of the same date, there were 221 Garda members assigned to Tallaght Garda station an increase of 18% since 2017 when there were 181 Garda members assigned to Tallaght Garda station. These members work alongside 22 Garda Staff who perform a number of vital roles that are essential to a modern police service and increase the availability of Gardaí to concentrate on frontline policing duties.

I am pleased that An Garda Síochána is once again in a period of sustained recruitment, with new recruits entering the Garda College and new probationer Gardaí attesting on an ongoing basis. The recent allocation of over €2.3 Billion to An Garda Síochána as part of Budget 2023 will ensure that this momentum is maintained.



I recently attended the attestation of 126 new Gardaí in Templemore. Numbers in Templemore also continue to increase, with attestations every 3 months - 135 trainees entered the training college in February, a class of 154 in May, another of 174 at the end of July, and 177 in October, the largest class since the reopening of the College since Covid, continuing the building momentum in recruitment.

Rollout by the Garda Commissioner of the new Garda Operating Model is well underway, with seven of the now 21 divisions rolled out so far, and meets a key commitment in A Policing Service for our Future, the four-year implementation plan giving effect to the recommendations of the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland.

The model is designed to make changes to the structures of An Garda Síochána to provide for more frontline Gardaí, increased Garda visibility, and a wider range of policing services for people in their local area.

At present, the new model is currently being rolled out in all 21 divisions and is fully commenced in seven, including the Dublin South Central, Cork City, Kerry, Galway, Limerick and Mayo-Roscommon-Longford Divisions, with Clare/Tipperary having rolled out in August 2023.

As you can appreciate the Garda Commissioner is responsible for the management and administration of Garda business and he determines the divisional structures throughout the State. The Commissioner is also responsible by law for the distribution and stationing of the Garda Síochána throughout the State and I have no role in such matters.

I am informed that under the Model, each Division will, for the first time, have a Superintendent dedicated to Crime, a Superintendent dedicated to Governance and Performance Assurance, and a number of Superintendents in charge of Community Engagement.

The Model will particularly enhance the investigation of crime through the delivery of a greater range of specialised services in local areas such as the investigation of sexual crime, domestic violence, cyber-crime, and economic crime.

An Garda Síochána has committed to ensuring superintendents will be in locations throughout a Division and not all located in the Divisional Headquarters. There will also be a significant increase in the allocation of sergeants and inspectors to Divisions, particularly in the area of community policing. The Garda Commissioner has confirmed to me that there are no plans to move any Garda members formally appointed to specialist units as part of any roster changes.



Specifically, neither Community Policing nor Divisional Drugs Units will be disbanded. An Garda Síochána remains committed to community policing and drugs enforcement. Any temporary changes to unit allocations will be reconsidered and addressed through the ongoing recruitment process.

An Garda Síochána have advised that there are no plans for any station closures or changes to publically advertised opening hours of Garda station

I trust the above is of use.

Yours sincerely

Helen McEntee T.D.  
Minister for Justice

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