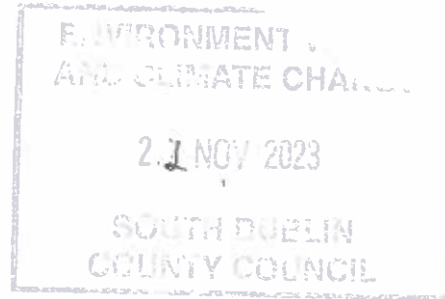




Oifig an Aire | Office of the Minister
Ms. Sharon Conroy
County Hall
Belgard Square North
Tallaght
Co. Dublin



20th November 2023

M 80429

Minister's Reference: DJE-MO-09472-2023

Dear Ms. Conroy,

Thank you for your letter of the 23 October 2023 where you have requested additional Garda resources to tackle drug dealing and other anti social behaviour in the Clondalkin District.

I can assure you that the government is acutely conscious of the devastating impact that illegal drugs and drug dealing have on communities across the country. I have discussed these concerns with the Commissioner and his senior team. Tackling drug dealing and associated criminal activity, including by organised crime groups and by members of the public who, through their drug taking, fuel this illegal and very harmful trade, is a top priority for An Garda Síochána and the government.

I hope you can appreciate that the Garda Commissioner is operationally responsible for the management and administration of An Garda Síochána. This includes the allocating of resources, including Garda members, to a given area or specialised unit. It is not within my remit to direct the Commissioner on these matters.

I am advised by the Garda authorities that the number of Garda members assigned to the DMR West Division has increased by over 5% since the end of 2017. Clondalkin District has also seen a 4% increase in Garda members during the same period. In addition, the number of Gardaí assigned to the Drugs Unit in the DMR West Division has increased by 53% since the end of 2017.

Since the reopening of the Garda College in September 2014 a total of 395 Garda members have been assigned to the DMR West Division. This includes the 34 Probationer Gardaí who were assigned to the Division this year.



The government is committed to building stronger, safer communities – and strengthening An Garda Síochána is at the core of that. We will continue to provide An Garda Síochána with the resources it needs to ensure communities around Ireland are safe and feel safe. This is reflected in the unprecedented allocation of €2.31 billion in Budget 2024, up 23% since 2020, demonstrating our commitment to ensuring the organisation has provision for the equipment, technology, facilities, fleet and personnel it needs to carry out vital policing work.

Numbers in Templemore continue to increase, with attestations every 3 months - 135 trainees entered the training college in February, 154 entered in May, 174 entered in July, and another 177 entered the college last month, the largest intake since Covid.

This means that nearly 500 trainees are currently in the system, with one more class due into Templemore in December.

237 new Gardaí have attested so far this year. We are on track to have between 700 and 800 new recruits into the college in 2023.

An Garda Síochána continues to target those involved in the sale and supply of illegal drugs through Operation Tara, which has a strong focus on tackling street-level dealing across the country. Operation Tara also focuses on disrupting and dismantling the drug trafficking networks that impact on our communities and prosecuting those involved, at every level.

I understand that Gardaí recently seized over €100,000 in drugs and arrested one man as part of an Operation Tara search in Dublin in September 2023. The Garda National Drugs and Organised Crime Bureau (GNDOCB) has also had significant, sustained success in disrupting the supply of illicit drugs by organised crime groups. In August, there was a seizure of €163m worth of suspected cocaine and cannabis in Dublin by the Dublin Crime Response Team.



Oifig an Aire | Office of the Minister

I hope this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

Helen McEntee T.D.
Minister for Justice

Please note that if the issue raised in your correspondence is deemed more appropriate to another organisation, such as another Government Department or Agency, your correspondence will be forwarded to that organisation for attention in accordance with the provisions of the Department of Justice Privacy Statement, which can be accessed on our website here: <https://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/DOJ-Privacy-Notice-2022.pdf/Files/DOJ-Privacy-Notice-2022.pdf>