

**POLICING AUTHORITY CONFERENCE ON
COMMUNITY SAFETY OVERSIGHT
WHAT IT SHOULD MEAN IN AN IRISH POLICING CONTEXT**

Held on July 25th 2019 in Dublin

Attended by Tony Clyne PPN Wexford.

On the panel were Dr Johnny Connolly research fellow in UL School of law

Ms Rita Fagan Director Family Resource Centre Inchicore

Ms Susannah Hancock Association of Policing and Crime Commissioners UK

Pro Duncan Morrow Professor of Community Engagement Ulster University

Dr Connolly spoke about the need of community leaders especially in areas of high crime rates he also pointed out that 80% of Garda time was spent on social issues such as homeless mental health and other areas that are not accessible out of hours mental health being an important issue he also commented that a lot of desk work could be done by civilians which would leave Gardai to do the work that they were trained for.

Susannah Hancock spoke on the matter of crime that's not only a police matter knife crime anti-social behavior drugs but also involves other statutory bodies such health education and also community

Rita Fagan spoke about gangs of youths between the ages 8/14 years of age going around terrorizing people and also how some are delivering drugs for dealers and getting paid for it

She gave an example of how a couple in her community were being terrorized by a gang of youths and how the man feared that his child in the pram was going to be hurt a man started filming it on his phone one of the youths saw this and gave chase to him he escaped and hid this happened at approximately 6pm a person had phoned the Gardai and they arrived at about 10pm he showed them the film he had taken and was told he could be prosecuted for taking the photos as the youths were under age she also spoke of the fear people of speaking out about the dealers in there community. She also spoke of the need for Gardai to be out among the public like the old fashion policing.

Professor Duncan Morrow of the importance of Joint Policing Committees and the involvement of the local communities in them and meetings should have an agenda and not be a talking shop policing at local level is about human rights. Police are a service to the

community and people need to be safe and feel safe. He gave examples of how there were 28 local authorities in the North of Ireland and a Joint Police committee in each this was reduced to 11 authorities and so a reduced number of Joint Policing Committees which created a disconnect between the police and the general public.

The conference concluded that there should be more community policing and greater emphases on crime prevention rather than crime detection as it is costing over €100,000 per year to keep a prisoner in jail, and also gaining the trust of the people.