

**Remarks by Garda Commissioner Fachtna Murphy at the official opening of  
Ballymun Station and the launch of the National Community Policing Model  
Monday, 26 January 2009**

**Minister, honoured guests, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,**

**I wish to extend a warm welcome to all of you, and particularly Minister Ahern, for taking time out of his busy schedule to be with us on this significant occasion for Ballymun.**

**The construction of this new Garda Divisional Headquarters Station is an important development for policing in Ballymun and the North Dublin area and is indicative of the commitment of Government and An Garda Síochána in responding to the needs of the local community.**

**The establishment of a Garda Divisional Headquarters in Ballymun complements the regeneration programme that has been taking place here over the last ten years.**

**On behalf of An Garda Síochána, I would like to acknowledge the role of the Office of Public Works in bringing this important project to fruition, and of course Ciaran O'Connor, the Principle Architect, and his associates for designing, and McNamara Building Contractors for constructing such an impressive building.**

**I want to recognise the contribution of the Gardai who are based here and who have worked to build and maintain partnerships with the community, listening to and responding to their concerns. This is crucial to the maintenance of public confidence in our service. An Garda Síochána has enjoyed an excellent relationship with the community in this area over many years and I am confident that this relationship will continue and be enhanced in the future.**

**It is fitting that today the official opening of this Garda Station coincides with the launch of a new National Model of Community Policing which is aimed at building on the successes already achieved in the area of community involvement.**

**As an organisation, An Garda Síochána has a long-established tradition of fostering and developing close relationships within the communities it serves. I am a consistent and strong advocate of the concept of ‘Community Policing’ as I see it central to An Garda Síochána’s ability to deliver a professional, effective and responsive policing service.**

**It is essential that the community remains at the heart of everything we do, as they are our greatest ally in our work in preventing and detecting crime and protecting the safety of the people we serve.**

We have developed a 'National Model' of community policing in order to renew, reinvigorate and re-structure our Community Policing function. This new model builds on the success of existing good Community Policing practice and aims to create a policing environment where collaborative 'Partnerships' are fostered between An Garda Síochána and the community in order to find local solutions to local problems and increase safety and security in our society.

Importantly, the model is built around ten core components or 'Pillars' which serve to inform everything Gardaí do in their interaction with the community.

These are:-

(1) Garda / Community Partnerships which recognise that the problems faced by An Garda Síochána cannot be solved without the assistance of the community.

(2) Enforcement – Community Gardaí will be actively involved in the prevention of crime, the reduction of the fear of crime and ensuring a better quality of community life for all.

(3) Problem-Solving - every member of An Garda Síochána has a role in supporting and implementing problem-solving initiatives.

(4) Crime Prevention and Reduction – This recognises the fact that, in order to effectively combat crime and the fear of crime, comprehensive crime prevention and reduction strategies must be supported.

(5) Accountability – It is crucial that we consistently measure what we have achieved against our objectives.

**(6) Visibility** - Community policing personnel will be responsible for developing and delivering 'High Visibility' strategies within their areas of patrol.

**(7) Accessibility** - The public should be able to identify with their local Community Gardaí and know that they can make contact with them.

**(8) Collaborative Engagement** - engagement must be a 'collaborative' process, with An Garda Síochána and Community Stakeholders working together, to improve the 'quality of life' of people and to reflect their needs and priorities.

**(9) Empowerment** - it is essential that ownership, participation and shared responsibility exists at every level, and that the Gardaí interact with the public through Community Policing.

**(10) Improved Response** - the visibility, accessibility and collaborative engagement practices of Community Gardaí within the Model will ultimately improve the response capability of An Garda Síochána to its community stakeholders.

The document sets an ambitious timeframe for the establishment of an appropriately structured renewed model of Community Policing in every Garda District by the end of the current year.

I have nominated Deputy Commissioner Nacie Rice to act as the organisation's Community Policing Champion to ensure that the culture and ethos of community policing is led from a high level in the organisation and is embedded in our policies. A national community policing office will be established within Garda Community Relations Section and every district officer throughout the country will take ownership of community policing within their area of responsibility.

We have designed a versatile community policing strategy which will see different models deployed to suit specific policing needs in diverse urban and rural areas. I

**am confident that this approach will enhance our effectiveness and ability to respond to the community and deliver on our core purpose which is to work together to secure safer communities for everyone.**

**I would now like to call on the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Deputy Dermot Ahern.**

**ENDS**