

**Minutes of the Portlaoise Municipal District Meeting held in Áras and Chontae
on the 18th January, 2017 at 11.00 a.m.**

Present: Mr. John Joe Fennelly, M.C.C. Chairperson

Ms. Catherine Fitzgerald, M.C.C., Caroline Dwane Stanley,
M.C.C. Willie Aird, A.C.C., Mary Sweeney, M.C.C., Noel
Tuohy, M.C.C., Jerry Lodge, M.C.C.

In attendance: Mr. Kieran Kehoe, D.O.S., Wes Wilkinson, A.S.E., Kim
Kinsella, A.O., Róisín Hennessy, S.O.

- 1) **Confirmation of minutes of the meeting of the Portlaoise Municipal District held on the 18th of January, 2017.**

On the proposal of Councillor Mary Sweeney, seconded by Councillor Willie Aird, the minutes of the meeting held on the 12th of December, 2016 were confirmed and circulated.

- 2) **MATTERS ARISING**

Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley raised the matter of illegal dumping at DeVesi Court and requested a meeting with residents, the Management Company and Council staff. Kieran Kehoe is to revert back to her.

Councillor Mary Sweeney raised the matter regarding the proposed remedial works at Glenbrook, Ballyroan. Mr. Kieran Kehoe, Director of Services will check the contract and revert with timeframes.

Councillor Mary Sweeney raised the matter regarding the lighting in the carpark in County Hall. Kieran Kehoe will look into the matter and revert.

Councillor Jerry Lodge raised the issue regarding to the tall trees Craydon Court, Portlaoise. Mr. Wes Wilkinson is to look into the matter and revert.

Councillor Willie Aird raised the issue regarding the extension of the footpath over the railway bridge. He requested a copy of the legislation regarding the right of way on Fr. Browne Avenue. CIE responsibility. Mr. Wes Wilkinson has contacted CIE regarding this matter and is awaiting a response.

Councillor John Joe Fennelly raised the matter regarding Clár funding and enquired whether Raheen was included in that. Mr. Kieran Kehoe, Director of Services is to circulate a copy of the Clár fuding.

3) NOTICES OF MOTION

NOTICE OF MOTION No.: 01/2017

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:

“That Portlaoise Municipal Authority calls on Laois County Council to put a yellow box at the junction of Ferndale and the Dublin Road”. The motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald.

The following response was given by Mr. Wes Wilkinson, A/S.E.E.

“This location can be considered for installation of a yellow box when carrying out road marking work later this year”.

Mr. Wilkinson added that he had no objection to this and that a contractor would be in place in the next few months

NOTICE OF MOTION NO.: 02/2017.

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:

“That Portlaoise Municipal Authority calls on Laois County Council to request the TII to review their speed limit policy on rural roads in the Portlaoise area e.g. The 80 km/hr on the Pallas/ Coolnamona Road”. The motion was seconded by Councillor Mary Sweeney.

The following response was given by Mr. Farhan Nasiem, A/S.E.E. and read by Ms. Kim Kinsella: ***“TII has been informed of all the concerns raised by Councillors in Speed limit review meeting in 2016”.***

Councillor Aird stated that the road was not capable of this speed limit and that the signs were misleading.

Mr. Kieran Kehoe, Director of Services added that as the limit is under 80 km, Laois County Council is responsible for this. He added that the speed limits were now being reviewed and will go before Full Council.

NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 3/2017

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:

“That Portlaoise Municipal Authority calls Laois County Council to once and for all make safe the junction at the Ballyclider road with Higgs Lane”. The motion was seconded by Councillor Mary Sweeney.

The following response was given by Mr. Kieran Kehoe, Director of Services.

“This will be included in the 2017 Works Programme”.

Mr. Kieran Kehoe, Director of Services apologised and confirmed that this work will be done early this year.

Councillor Willie Aird requested Councillor John Joe Fennelly request the TII to contribute to the state the junction was left in at Ballycyider Rd.

NOTICE OF MOTION: 04/2017:

Councillor Mary Sweeney proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council urgently repair road at Sheffield Junction as loose chippings are causing dangerous surface”. The Motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird.

The following response was given by Mr. Wes Wilkinson, A/S.E.E.

“This section of road has been swept and the surface dressing will be relayed at the earliest opportunity at the start of the surface dressing season”.

It was stressed that this was urgent

NOTICE OF MOTION No.: 05/2017

Councillor Mary Sweeney proposed the following Notice of Motion:

“That Laois County urgently provide road surfacing at Tullore, Ballyroan”. This Motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird.

The following answer was given by Mr. Wes Wilkinson, A/S.E.E.

“I have arranged to meet Councillor Sweeney at this location in the coming days. This location may be considered for surfacing as part of the 2017 Road Programme.

Councillor Sweeney was happy with this response.

NOTICE OF MOTION No: 06/2017

Councillor Mary Sweeney proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council repair gullys at Colt, Ballyroan at a location previously visited “. This motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird.

The following response was given by Mr. Wes Wilkinson, A/S.E.E.

“I have arranged to meet Councillor Sweeney at this location in the coming days. This location may be considered for surfacing as part of the 2017 Road Programme”.

NOTICE OF MOTION No. 07/2017

Councillor John Joe Fennelly proposed this Notice of Motion.

“That this Council up grade lighting outside the library in Abbeyleix as over 90% of them are not working”. This motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird.

The following response was given by Mr. Farhan Nasiem, A/S.E.E. and read out by Ms. Kim Kinsella, A.O. Roads.

“Road Design will examine the issue and prepare costing for repair and upgrade of lighting outside Abbeyleix Library”.

Councillor Fennelly stated that there were two working out of nineteen. It was also stated that the library needed painting

NOTICE OF MOTION No.: 08/2017

Councillor John Joe Fennelly proposed this Notice of Motion:

“That this Council up grade road verges at Roskelton Church as this has now become a safety issue”. This motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird.

The following response was given by Mr. Wes Wilkinson, A/S.E.E.

“Works will be carried out to the verge at this location in the coming weeks”.

Cllr. Fennelly was happy with this response

NOTICE OF MOTION No.: 09/2017

Councillor John Joe Fennelly proposed this Notice of Motion:

“That this Council install safety measures at Shanahoe National School”. Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley seconded this motion.

The following response was given by Mr. Wes Wilkinson, A/S.E.E.

“Funding has been obtained for safety works at this location under the Town and Villages Renewal Scheme. We intend to have a proposal agreed in the coming weeks and for works to be completed by April 2017”.

Councillor Fennelly thanked Wes Wilkinson.

Councillor Dwane Stanley requested that there would be a reduction of the speed limit outside the school.

NOTICE OF MOTION No.: 10/2017

Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley proposed this Notice of Motion:

“That this Council ensure that the gates at the Town Park, Triogue Linear Park, Riverview and Riverview Walk be closed at night”. Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded this motion.

The following response was given by Mr. Kieran Kehoe, D.O.S.

“These parks will continue to be closed for the next period and any alteration to this will be discussed with the Portlaoise MD Councillors”

Councillor Dwane Stanley welcomed that no decision was made and stated that there was a long history of the gates being closed and important for the older residents. She added that she will no accept the gates being left open.

Mr. Kieran Kehoe, Director of Services added that any changes will be communicated to the Members at the Municipal District meeting.

NOTICE OF MOTION No.: 11/2017

Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley proposed this Notice of Motion:

“That this Council upgrade and improve Public Lighting in Lynden Court, Ballyfin Road”. This motion was seconded by Councillor Jerry Lodge.

The following response was given by Mr. Farhan Nasiem, A/S.E.E., Road Design and read out by Ms. Kim Kinsella, A.O. Roads.

“Public Lighting section will assess the lights at Lynden Court with a view to their adequacy and need for upgrade”.

Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley is also to meet Mr. Farhan Nasiem regarding this.

Cllr. Lodge supported this motion and added when the lights are being examined to also look at the trees. It was requested that Laois County Council consult with the residents.

NOTICE OF MOTION No.: 12/2017

Councillor Caroline Dwane proposed this Notice of Motion:

“That this Council include in the Roads Program the resurfacing of the Road from Fatharnagh Junction to O’ Connors house at the junction in Roskelton”. This motion was seconded by Councillor Jerry Lodge.

The following response was given by Mr. Wes Wilkinson, A/S.E.E., Roads.

“This location may be considered for surfacing as part of the 2017 Road Programme”.

Cllr. Dwane Stanley thanked Cllr. Fennelly and Mr. Wes Wilkinson.

NOTICE OF MOTION No.: 13/2017

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed this Motion.

“That this Council resurface Hawthorn Drive”. Councillor Willie Aird seconded this Motion.

The following answer was given by Mr. Wes Wilkinson, A/S.E.E.

“I will visit this location in the coming days to identify priority areas. This location may be considered for surfacing as part of the 2017 Road Programme”.

Cllr. Fitzgerald thanked Wes Wilkinson .

NOTICE OF MOTION No.: 14/2017

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed this Motion.

“That this Council address the flooding problem at the top of Grenville.”. Councillor Jerry Lodge seconded this Motion.

The following answer was given by Mr. Wes Wilkinson, A/S.E.E., Roads.
“Installation of a gully will be carried out over the coming weeks”

Cllr. Fitzgerald was happy with the response to the motion.

NOTICE OF MOTION No.: 15/2017

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed this Motion.

“That this Council address the dark and dirty signs on the islands on roads around the town eg., “Outside the Maldron hotel ”. Councillor Mary Sweeney seconded this motion.

The following answer was given by Mr. Wes Wilkinson A/S.E.E.

“Cleaning of these signs will be carried out in the coming weeks”.

Cllr. Aird said some lights need to be repaired. Cllr. Lodge added that there was some signage broken too and that there was possibly illegal signage.

NOTICE OF MOTION 16/2017

Councillor Noel Tuohy propose the following Notice of Motion.

“That Laois County Council take all necessary steps and enforcement to tackle the problem of unsightly and derelict premises on Main Street and within the town precincts”

The following answer was given by Ms. Deirdre Hunt, S.S.O., Planning Department and read by Ms. Kim Kinsella, A.O., Roads Department:

“Laois County Council are currently pursuing 4 no sites on the Main Street Portlaoise all of which are at various levels of engagement with the land owners and various others within the town of Portlaoise generally under the Derelict Sites Act 1990. We will continue to proactively pursue sites that are brought to our attention. A number of grants/financial assistance will be available in 2017 to help property owners who may have derelict sites -such as the shopfront grant administered through the Business Support Unit as well as Business Incentive Schemes”.

This motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley.

Councillor Tuohy raised the matter regarding the legislation for Derelict Sites and if it is being implemented.

Councillor Dwane Stanley supported the motion and raised the matter of the County Hotel.

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald also supported the motion and raised the matter of implementing a programme to tackle the issue.

Councillor John Joe Fennelly also supported the motion and raised the issue of penalties. It was agreed the penalties were too low.

Councillor Jerry Lodge supported the motion and raised the matter of the Derelict Sites legislation and suggested a meeting with Downtown and a call made to each owner.

Councillor Willie Aird also supported the motion and raised but did not agree to contacting the owners of the derelict buildings. He supported 100% the Council's decision to close the street at Christmas for safety. He also congratulated Downtown for organising Christmas market.

Councillor Mary Sweeney also agreed with the Notice of Motion and said it was timely and should be discussed with the review of the Development Plan. also raised the issue of contacting owner

A discussion about derelicts sites took place and it was requested that the Council look at the old building and asses them before they fall and that a programme be put in place to tackle these unsightly buildings such as the County Hotel and the Prison Officers club.

Mr. Kieran Kehoe, Director of Service acknowledged the funding that has been spent of re-juvenating Portlaoise town, and stated that the new Chief Executive's is prioritising this and focusing on upgrading the town. He said that there had been investment in signs, plants etc and he noted the increase in the eyeball score to 16th. He informed that LCC was in the middle of a Town Vision Statement and that was due at the end of the month.

Regarding the Shop Grant Scheme LCC had to approach the shop owners. He spoke of the Business Initiative Scheme regarding re-use of derelict sights. He confirmed that one planner is now concentrating soley on derelict sites and that he will have a report at the next meeting. Kieran said there was co-operation with the County Hotel owner.

NOTICE OF MOTION 17/2017

Councillor Jerry Lodge proposed this Motion.

“That this meeting be presented with a report from the Road Safety Officer concerning the safety of the recently constructed pedestrian crossing at Timahoe Road, Portlaoise”. This Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane.

The following answer was given by Mr. Farhan Nasiem, A/S.E.E., Road Design and read by Ms. Kim Conway, Roads.

“Works on Pedestrian crossing are now complete and Road Safety Audit will be carried for this pedestrian crossing any issues raised in safety audit will be addressed”.

Cllr. Dwane Stanley and Cllr. Lodge fully supported the pedestrian crossing and would like to see safety report. Cllr. Aird added that it was safer especially for the Senior Citizens. Cllr. Fitzgerald also welcomed the crossing. Cllr. Fitzgerald requested more signage for motorists.

NOTICE OF MOTION 18/2017

Councillor Jerry Lodge proposed this Motion.

“That this meeting calls on Irish Water to give an update on the upgrading of the sewage system in Bull Lane as this was promised for 2016”. This Motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird.

The following answer was given by Mr. Tom O’Carroll, Area Engineer.

“During 2016, the investigation of this problem was approved for inclusion, by Irish Water, in the scope of works of the Minor Project – Portlaoise Drainage Area Plan(DAP) – which seeks to determine and establish accurate information of all the flows and organic loads in the Portlaoise Drainage Catchment Area(Foul and Combined sewers). This investigation project was due for completion in early 2017, however there has been some issues with the procurement of survey contractors framework – which has resulted in delays. It is now hoped that these surveys will commence in April and final reports will be available by the end of the year”

Mr. Kieran Kehoe is to contact Irish Water.

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence for distribution.

6. FIX TIME, DATE & VENUE FOR NEXT MEETING.

The next meeting is to be held on the 15th February, 2017 @ 11.00 a.m. in the Council Chamber of Áras an Chontae.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____

CATHAOIRLEACH

Certified: _____

DIRECTOR OF SERVICE.