

**MINUTES OF THE PORTLAOISE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY, 15TH OF NOVEMBER 2023 IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PORTLAOISE**

RESENT: Ms. Catherine Fitzgerald, Cathaoirleach (In the Chair)
Mr. Barry Walsh, M.C.C.
Ms. Caroline Dwane Stanley, M.C.C.
Mr. Willie Aird, M.C.C.
Mr. John Joe Fennelly, M.C.C.
Ms. Marie Tuohy, M.C.C.
Ms. Thomasina Connell, M.C.C.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr. Simon Walton, Director of Services
Mr. Wes Wilkinson, Senior Executive Engineer
Ms. Michelle McCormack, Staff Officer
Ms. Suzanne O' Connor, Community Department
Ms. Orla Fitzpatrick, Community Development

1. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THE 18TH OF OCTOBER 2023

On the proposition of Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley seconded by Councillor Thomasina Connell, the minutes of the Portlaoise Municipal District meeting held on the 18th of October 2023 were confirmed as circulated.

2. MINUTES OF THE BUDGET MEETING HELD ON THE 18TH OF OCTOBER 2023

On the proposition of Councillor Barry Walsh seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly, the minutes of the Portlaoise Budget meeting held on the 18th of October 2023 were confirmed as circulated

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING HELD ON THE 18TH OF OCTOBER 2023

There were no matters arising from the meeting held on the 18th of October 2023.

4. Laois LECP 2023-2028 – CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS/OUTCOMES FOR HIGH LEVEL GOALS

Ms. Suzanne O' Connor & Ms. Orla Fitzpatrick, Community Section delivered a presentation to the Portlaoise MD Members on the objectives and high level goals of the Laois LECP 2023-2028 and responded to the various queries by the members. The Members were given a summary of the public consultation process, the surveys carried out and the feedback from same. It was noted that Laois County Council are at Stage 3 of the process and it is proposed that the plan will be adopted by the Members at the January 2024 Council Meeting.

5. Notice of Motions

Notice of Motion No: 132/2023

Councillor Thomasina Connell proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That this Council install a facility on the pay and display machines to enable users to use their card to tap to pay for parking"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird. The Members were advised that Laois County Council currently owns 75 pay and display parking machines, in Portlaoise, Portarlinton and Mountmellick. The existing pay and display machines are approaching end-of-life, in terms of reliability and ongoing upkeep costs. A replacement programme will commence in 2024, whereby cash/contactless pay and display machines will replace cash-only machines. Cash/Contactless pay and display machines have been provided in the recently-opened Railway Street Car Park. Payment options for car parking are also available on the Parking Tag App.

It was agreed that Laois County Council will re-advertise parking payment options, indicating all options available including cashless options.

Notice of Motion No: 133/2023

Councillor Thomasina Connell proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That this Council undertake a road safety assessment at the Timahoe Road between the Cattle Mart & roundabout in order to install features which would reduce the speed of vehicles coming in & leaving Portlaoise"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Barry Walsh. The Members were advised that Laois County Council will arrange a Road Safety Impact assessment to be undertaken at this location.

Notice of Motion No: 134/2023

Councillor Thomasina Connell proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That this Council give an update in relation to the lift which is out of use at the car park at the County Council plaza"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Barry Walsh. The Members were advised that the lift is currently out of operation as it has been vandalised. The lift will be repaired shortly and brought back into use, as required.

Notice of Motion No: 135/2023

Councillor Marie Tuohy proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That Laois County Council repair the railings at the pedestrian crossing on the Stradbally Road across from the Church"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley. The Members were advised that the Portlaoise MD Office will arrange to carry out the repairs to the railings at the pedestrian crossing on the N80 at the Stradbally Road, Portlaoise.

Notice of Motion No: 136/2023

Councillor Marie Tuohy proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That Laois County Council give an update as to the provision of the area of reflection for those bereaved during Covid times"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley. The Members were advised that the Portlaoise MD Office intends to carry out works to construct an area of reflection in Pairc an Pobail adjacent to the Timahoe Road pedestrian entrance after the Housing Section complete the rebuilding of the boundary wall between the park and the No. 1 The Cottages, New Road, Portlaoise. It is now understood that the boundary wall will be completed in Q. 2 of 2024.

Notice of Motion No: 137/2023

Councillor Barry Walsh proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That Laois County Council provide a Bus Stop in Ballyroan and also write to local bus providers to consider collecting & dropping at the Sue Ryder facility in Ballyroan. Some of the elderly residents who depend on this service struggle to get to the current bus stop due to disabilities and during poor weather conditions"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird. The Members were advised that Laois County Council will notify the NTA of the request for a

bus Shelter in Ballyroan. The provision of a Bus Shelter will be considered in the context of shelter provision across the County. The location of the Bus Stop will be assessed and considered as part of any future works in Ballyroan to ensure it is suitably located to serve the needs of all users.

Notice of Motion No: 138/2023

Councillor Barry Walsh proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That Laois County Council include upper Main Street Ballyroan in the Road Resurfacing Programme 2024"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. The Members were advised that the Portlaoise MD Office will examine the R425 Main Street, Ballyroan for consideration for resurfacing works in the 2024 Roads Programme.

Notice of Motion No: 139/2023

Councillor Barry Walsh proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That Laois County Council provide an update on previous motion for request for extension of footpath to the crèche in Ballyroan under active travel"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. The Members were advised that there is no current funding allocation available from NTA Active Travel Funding for this location. Alternative funding will have to be sourced and secured in order for the works requested to be progressed.

Notice of Motion No: 140/2023

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That the Portlaoise Municipal District calls on Laois County Council to provide public lighting and to repair the loose bricks in the apartment block in the retirement village in Kilminchy"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that this apartment complex at the Green, Kilminchy is a private development and not in the charge of Laois County Council.

Councillor Aird requested that the area be taken in charge noting that some of the houses are on a long term lease with Laois County Council.

Notice of Motion No: 141/2023

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That the Portlaoise Municipal District calls on Laois County Council to install road surface lighting on all pedestrian crossings"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Barry Walsh. The Members were advised that Laois County Council will trial the use of embedded surface lighting and assess the benefits and feedback from the trial.

Councillor Aird requested a timeframe for the trial and if Fr. Browne Avenue could be included as a priority for the trial.

Notice of Motion No: 142/2023

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That the Portlaoise Municipal District re-paint the line markings on the road at the Rock School and also to ensure that speed limit signs are clearly visible to oncoming motorists in the interest of the safety of children and parents"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Barry Walsh. The Members were advised that the Road Design Section will be carrying out road marking works this week and they are also making arrangements to replace speed radar signage at this location.

Notice of Motion No: 143/2023

Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That this Council cut back the trees on the boundary between Carmody Way / Higgins Park Fairgreen and Clonrooske Abbey"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Marie Tuohy. The Members were advised that The Portlaoise MD Office will arrange for an Arborist to assess the trees at this location and address any significant issues that arise.

Notice of Motion No: 144/2023

Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That this Council bring back into housing stock Number 39 Lakeglen and give an update as to when the ramp outside number 13 and 14 Lakeglen will be installed, also request the Director of Housing to engage urgently with Simon to

seek clarification on their future capacity with homeless services currently in the midlands area"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Marie Tuohy. The Members were advised that In relation to 39 Lakeglen, re-let works commenced by Midlands Simon on Friday November 10th and the property should be available for relet mid-December. Tenant nominations will then be sought from the local authority. The Portlaoise MD Office are making arrangements to install a traffic calming ramp in the vicinity of No. 13 & 14 Lakeglen within the next four to five weeks.

Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley advised the Members that No. 39 Lakeglen has been vacant for a few months now and there are residents concerned regarding its state of repair. Councillor Dwane Stanley requested Mr. Simon Walton, Director of Services to liaise with Midlands Simon for an update.

Notice of Motion No: 145/2023

Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That this Council carry out improvements/enhancement works in Cois and Bruach na hAbhann, Market Mews Marybourough, and Green View Mountmellick Road"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Marie Tuohy. The Members were advised that Estate Management proposes to carry out enhancement/improvement works to estates in the three Municipal Districts in 2024, including the estates mentioned by Councillor Dwane Stanley. However, these works are dependent on the availability of local authority funding and the spending of such funding will be spread across the three Municipal Districts.

Notice of Motion No: 146/2023

Councillor John Joe Fennelly proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That this Council increase signage and line marking at the junction of Boston Lane, Abbeyleix, on the R433"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Barry Walsh. The Members were advised that Mr. Wes Wilkinson will make himself available to meet with Councillor Fennelly at the junction of the L16562 and the R433 to examine the issues and make an application for road safety scheme funding.

Notice of Motion No: 147/2023

Councillor John Joe Fennelly proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That this Council increase drainage and clean existing manholes at Tullore"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Barry Walsh. The Members were advised that Mr. Wes Wilkinson, S.E.E. will make himself available to meet with Councillor Fennelly at Tullore, Ballyroan to examine the drainage issues at this location.

Notice of Motion No: 148/2023

Councillor John Joe Fennelly proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That this Council erect a speed detection sign/ramp at Abbeyleix Road, Ballyroan close to Green Road Junction as you exit Abbeyleix"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Barry Walsh. The Members were advised that Road Design will meet with Cllr John Joe Fennelly at the proposed location and assess the viability of installing a speed detection sign at this location.

Notice of Motion No: 149/2023

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That this Council remove hill on lane in Clonad"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. The Members were advised that Mr. Wes Wilkinson, S.E.E. will make himself available to meet Councillor Fitzgerald to examine the issue at Clonad.

Notice of Motion No: 150/2023

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:

"That this Council install a yellow box at Grenville and also repaint yellow lines at entrance to estate"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Thomasina Connell. The Members were advised that the Portlaoise MD Office will make arrangements to install a yellow box at the entrance to Grenville on the R445 and refresh the double yellow lines at the entrance to the estate.

Notice of Motion No: 151/2023

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That this Council arrange to have the clay removed behind Ashton Manor"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird. The Members were advised that the Building Control Officer has inspected the site and spoken with the Site Foreman. The Foreman advised that excess spoil/clay will be taken off-site in the next 2-3 weeks. As there is a considerable volume of spoil to be removed, it will take a number of weeks to move it all.

6. Correspondence

It was noted that no correspondence had been circulated since the last meeting of the Municipal District. The Members noted the following:

- ✚ Christmas Lights in Portlaoise would be officially turned on at the new Library on Friday, November 24th 2023;
- ✚ Free Parking will be accommodated similar to previous years on the three Saturdays leading into Christmas, i.e. 9th, 16th and 23rd of December, with time limited parking continuing as normal, in Portlaoise, Portarlinton and Mountmellick.
- ✚ Parking Study for Portlaoise would be circulated in advance of next Meeting.

7. Fix Date for Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting will take place on **Wednesday, 6th of December 2023 at 11.00 a.m.**

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Director of Services