

**MINUTES OF THE GRAIGUECULLEN/PORTARLINGTON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 11TH OF SEPTEMBER 2024 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN
CHONTAE, PORTLAOISE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

PRESENT Mr. Aidan Mullins, M.C.C. (In the Chair)
Mr. Padraig Fleming, M.C.C.
Mr. Paschal McEvoy, M.C.C.
Ms. Vivienne Phelan, M.C.C.
Ms. Aisling Moran, M.C.C.
Mr. Ben Brennan, M.C.C.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms. Julie Bergin, A/Head of Finance
Mr. Philip McVeigh, Senior Executive Engineer
Ms. Michelle McCormack, Staff Officer

(1) Confirmation of the Minutes of the May Meeting of the Graiguecullen/Portarlington Municipal District held on the 15th of May 2024

On the proposition of Councillor Ben Brennan seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy, the Members unanimously agreed the minutes of the May meeting of the Graiguecullen/Portarlington Municipal District held on the 15th of May 2024.

(2) Confirmation of the Annual General Meeting of the Graiguecullen/Portarlington Municipal District held on the 26th of June 2024

On the proposition of Councillor Ben Brennan seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy, the Members unanimously agreed the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Graiguecullen/Portarlington Municipal District held on the 26th of June 2024

(3) Progress Report

The report was noted, and the Members complimented Mr. Philip McVeigh, Senior Executive Engineer and all the team on the works that had been completed since the last meeting.

(4) Notice of Motions:-

Notice of Motion No: 73/2024

Councillor Aidan Mullins proposed the following Notice of Motion:

“That Laois County Council erect public signs on streets in towns in the Municipal District indicating that the use of E Scooters on footpaths is illegal”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Ben Brennan. The Members were advised that there is no regulatory sign in the Traffic Signs Manual indicating that E scooters are prohibited to use footpaths, The road

traffic regulations 2024 provides that signs for bicycle use will also apply to e-scooters.

Councillor Mullins enquired if it is possible for this matter to be included in the Traffic Signs Manual and he also advised that the regulations do not disallow Laois County Council erecting signage. It was requested that this be re-examined and it was agreed that Councillor Mullins would revert to the Road Design Section in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 74/2024

Councillor Aidan Mullins proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council install a speed ramp and Children at Play signs in Crann Nua Estate in Portarlinton”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Ben Brennan. The Members were advised that Laois County Council will arrange to meet with the Elected Member at this location to assess the works required.

Notice of Motion No: 75/2024

Councillor Aidan Mullins proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council give an update on the proposed use of the former HSE Clinic on French Church Street in Portarlinton and if it is available for community use”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Ben Brennan. The Members were advised that the HSE have recently advised that they no longer have a requirement for Portarlinton Health Centre however Laois County Council are not in a position to purchase same due to funding constraints. During the discussion Councillor Mullins asked if we could pursue this matter with the HSE with a view to the handover of the Centre for a nominal sum.

Notice of Motion No: 76/2024

Councillor Ben Brennan proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council give an update on the safety measures being put in place in Killeshin village on the R430”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Aisling Moran. The members were advised that the Road Design section of Laois County Council have conducted speed and topographic surveys which have informed the design for the traffic calming measures in Killeshin village. The design is being referred for an independent road safety audit following which an application for funding will be made.

Notice of Motion No: 77/2024

Councillor Ben Brennan proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council replace the old footpath in Doonane housing estate”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Aisling Moran. The Members were advised that Laois County Council will arrange to meet with the Elected Member on site to assess the works required.

Notice of Motion No: 78/2024

Councillor Ben Brennan proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council give an update on cleaning the footpaths and cutting back the hedge in Arles village as it is unsafe for people to walk on”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Aisling Moran. The Members were advised that Laois County Council will arrange for these works to be carried out in the coming weeks.

Notice of Motion No: 79/2024

Councillor Paschal McEvoy proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council give an update as to when ESB Charging points will be available in Stradbally”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Aisling Moran. The members were advised that Laois County have been working with Eir EasyGo for the provision of EV charging points on the main Street in Stradbally for a period of time. Following submission of an application enquiry the ESB reverted identifying capacity issues at the chosen location. Alternative sites have been identified and are currently under assessment for available power capacity. Should capacity be available, installation will follow within 2-3 months. Laois County Council have installed a range of EV chargers in Portarlinton, Portlaoise & Mountrath under this arrangement in the last number of months.

Notice of Motion No: 80/2024

Councillor Paschal McEvoy proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council investigate the possibility of speed ramps to slow traffic down on the approach to the Rock Of Dunamaise from the N80”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Ben Brennan. The Members were advised that Laois County Council will arrange for a speed survey to be carried out on the approach road between the N80 and the Rock of Dunamaise.

Notice of Motion No: 81/2024

Councillor Paschal McEvoy proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council move speed limit zone signs on the Timahoe Road, Stradbally from current location back close to bridge”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Vivienne Phelan. The Members were advised that The speed limit zones will be reviewed as part of the next county speed limit review.

Notice of Motion No: 82/2024

Councillor Pdraig Fleming proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council give an update on the installation of the appropriate cycle signage in the interest of promoting active travel modes of

travel and to work with the relevant stakeholders (N.T.A , T.I.I and the Dept of Transport) to ensure that the National ,Regional , and Local Roads are covered in the interest of Health and Safety”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy. The Members were advised that Laois County Council continue to work with the relevant stakeholders for the provision of cycle signage in accordance with the Traffic Signs Manual and the Cycle Design Manual. These signs are installed as a matter of course on all new active travel schemes. National, Regional & local roads will have signage installed where cycling is prominent or where they form part of identified cycling routes under the National Cycle Network Plan, the Laois Cycle Network (Cycle Connects) or other localised active travel or safe routes to school schemes. A number of locations have had cyclist signs installed to date with further routes to be signed in due course.

Notice of Motion No: 83/2024

Councillor Pdraig Fleming proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council rebuild the bridge wall that has collapsed (L7854) at Boley, Ballylinan”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Ben Brennan. The Members were advised that Laois County Council will arrange for works to be carried out at this bridge as soon as possible.

Notice of Motion No: 84/2024

Councillor Pdraig Fleming proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council install directional signs on the approach to Castletown Cross, Ballylinan”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Aisling Moran. The Members were advised that Laois County Council has inspected this location and these signs have now been installed.

Notice of Motion No: 85/2024

Councillor Vivienne Phelan proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council upgrade and improve public lighting outside the former Montague Hotel, to facilitate the safe use of public transportation by residents at the site”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy. The Members were advised that Laois County Council Road Design will carry out an inspection of the site and meet with Cllr Phelan to discuss the proposal.

Notice of Motion No: 86/2024

Councillor Vivienne Phelan proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council provide an update on the taking in charge of Cill Beg Manor Estate and the housing development surrounding the Heritage Hotel, Killenard”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy. The Members were advised that Laois County Council received a plebiscite from the residents of Cill Beg Manor estate. The Planning Authority must now confirm that the majority of the homeowners in the estate have signed the Plebiscite. Once confirmed the Local Authority will commence the formal taking in charge process. During the planning process the developer proposed that the estate surrounding the Heritage Hotel would be privately maintained by a management company. Therefore, the Local Authority will not be taking the development in charge.

Notice of Motion No: 87/2024

Councillor Vivienne Phelan proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council install speed ramps at Miners Walk Estate”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Ben Brennan. The Members were advised that Laois County Council will arrange for a speed survey to be carried out for the roads in this estate.

Notice of Motion No: 88/2024

Councillor Aisling Moran proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council create a new by-law to put a weight restriction in place at Coolglass, Wolfhill”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Ben Brennan. The Members were advised that the road does not meet the criteria for a weight restriction to be imposed.

Councillor Moran enquired regarding the criteria – it was agreed that Councillor Moran would liaise with Mr. James Dowling, S.E.E. in this regard.

Notice of Motion No: 89/2024

Councillor Aisling Moran proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council allocate a marked car parking space per house, with remainder to be allocated as communal. This needs to be done immediately in Hearherhill Square, Graiguecullen as it is causing undue stress to many residents and to make it part of planning conditions going forward”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Vivienne Phelan. The Members were advised that this request for a disabled parking spot and numbering of the parking spaces can be considered subject to funding being made available”

Notice of Motion No: 90/2024

Councillor Aisling Moran proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council give an update on the following - the removal of silt at Maidenhead culvert as it is 90% blocked, and a solution for speed on Maganey to Barrowhouse road as there has been two serious accidents in the same location over the past couple of months”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Ben Brennan. The Members were advised that in relation to **Maidenhead culvert** that TII’s Bridge Maintenance Contractor commenced work on removing the deposited material from the N80 Maidenhead Culvert last Thursday morning the 5th September. The clearance works are ongoing at present. The long-term solution to reduce ongoing maintenance at the culvert requires the material being deposited to be intercepted in advance of the culvert, to inform the design process for this solution a topographical survey has been undertaken on 9th September. Once the output from the survey is available it will be forwarded to the design consultants to progress the design of the permanent solution.

In relation to Barrowhouse Road, Laois County Council will inspect this location with a view to installing additional warning signage and roadmarkings. An Garda Síochána will also be contacted regarding the possibility of including this road in a speed enforcement zone, providing a speed van to assist in enforcing the speed limit and improving road safety along this section of road.

Councillor Aisling Moran requested that the TII meet the Members in relation to this issue. It was also requested that a contact number for the TII be made available to the Members.

(5) Correspondence

The Municipal District Members wished Mr. Gerry Murphy, Head of Finance every Good wish on his recent retirement and thanked him for his contribution during his time as Manager of the Graiguecullen/Portarlinton Municipal District.

The following correspondence was noted which was received from Ms. Paula Phelan, County Services Manager Laois Primary Care, Portlaoise in response to the following Notice Of Motion:-

“That Laois County Council request the Minister for Health, Mr. Stephen Donnelly, T.D., to restore the GP services to Ballylinan Health Centre”

The correspondence noted that Dr. Farrell retired from his GMS panel, in Ballylinan Health Centre and Woodstock, Athy, Co. Kildare on the 24th of December 2022. The recruitment campaign to replace Dr. Farrell commenced in August 2022 and

following a successful recruitment campaign Dr. Brian Flannery was the successful Candidate to replace Dr. Farrell in Ballylinan Health Centre. Dr. Flannery was unable to take up his post until the 1st of May 2023 and Dr. Farrell agreed to stay in post as a Doctor in charge until Dr. Flannery commenced. As part of the contract negotiation, Dr. Flannery agreed to work two mornings per week (9 a.m. to 1. P.m. Wednesday And Thursday) providing the same total number of hours per week in Ballylinan Health centre as Dr. Farrell did so services remain in place.

HSE Primary Care and Capital & Estates Departments are currently reviewing all Services in South Laois and exploring the options available to develop services including those in Ballylinan.

(5) Fix Date for Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on the 16th of October 2024.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____
Aidan Mullins, M.C.C. , Cathaoirleach

