

**MINUTES OF THE PORTLAOISE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY
11th DECEMBER 2019 IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PORTLAOISE**

PRESENT Mr. John Joe Fennelly, Cathaoirleach (In the Chair)
Ms. Mary Sweeney, M.C.C.
Ms. Catherine Fitzgerald, M.C.C.
Ms. Caroline Dwane Stanley, M.C.C.
Ms. Thomasina Connell, M.C.C.
Mr. Willie Aird, M.C.C.

APOLOGIES: Mr. Noel Tuohy, M.C.C.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr. Simon Walton, Director of Services
Mr. Wes Wilkinson, Senior Executive Engineer
Ms. Georgina Ireland, Administrative Officer
Ms. Michelle McCormack, Staff Officer

1. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER MEETING OF PORTLAOISE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT HELD ON THE 20TH OF NOVEMBER 2019

On the proposal of Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald, the minutes of the November meeting held on the 20th of November 2019 were confirmed as circulated.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING HELD ON THE 20TH OF NOVEMBER 2019

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on the 20th of November 2019

3. INFORMATION REGARDING THE TAKING IN CHARGE OF HYNDS SQUARE

At the November 2019 County Council Meeting, Elected Members deferred the taking in charge of Hynd's Square, arising from concerns raised by Members regarding car parking arrangements in and around the area.

Mr. Simon Walton, Director of Services briefed the Members on the Taking in Charge of Hynds Square and highlighted that the area proposed for taking in charge is a pedestrian area in its entirety.

Mr. Walton further advised the Members that, based on the current parking bye-laws, parking in the adjoining Jessop's Court was restricted to vehicles displaying a valid resident's parking permit only.

On the basis of the information provided, Members indicated that the taking in charge of Hynd's Square could be revisited at the January 2020 County Council Meeting.

Members further requested that a review of the provision of the bye-laws be undertaken in respect of Jessop's Court to ascertain if a more efficient system of car parking could be realised. It was agreed that the review of parking in Jessop's Court will be undertaken and the findings brought back to a future Municipal District Committee Meeting.

4. CASUAL TRADING BYE-LAWS FOR PORTLAOISE 2019

The draft Portlaoise Casual Trading Bye Laws 2019 were noted by the Members of the Portlaoise Municipal District at their September meeting held on the 25th of September 2019. Subsequently the draft bye laws were placed on public display from the 27th of September 2019 with a closing date of the 8th of November 2019. Three submissions were received as follows:-

- (i) Downtown Portlaoise Committee
- (ii) Daly's Seafood Shop, Lyster Square
- (iii) Laois Older People's Forum

Ms. Georgina Ireland, A.O., Roads & Transportation recommended the approval of the bye-laws with a commencement date of the 1st of January 2020. On the proposition of Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley seconded by Councillor Willie Aird the Casual Trading Bye-Laws for Portlaoise 2019 as presented were unanimously agreed.

Notice of Motion No: 173/2019

Councillor Mary Sweeney proposed the following Notice of Motion:

"That Laois County Council address the issues re: drainage at Raheenabrough Road, Ballyroan where flooding and ponding are causing concern for parents and other pedestrians at this locations – it needs repair and water cuts need to be opened as soon as possible"

This Notice of motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. The Members were advised that water cuts will be opened on the Raheenabrough / Mounteagle area within the coming weeks. The Portlaoise MD will liaise with local landowners at Raheenabrough / Mounteagle. It is intended to carryout drainage works at this location in early 2020.

Notice of Motion No: 174/2019

Councillor Mary Sweeney proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That the chevron road signs at the Rock Road be replaced as soon as possible and the debris on the junction cleared"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird. The Members were advised that the location will be made safe and the signage will be ordered and replaced in the coming weeks.

Notice of Motion No: 175/2019

Councillor Mary Sweeney proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

"That the warning signs at Cashel adjacent to the bad bends on the road on the R425 be replaced without delay as this needs new signage"

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird. The Members were advised that new warning signage will be ordered and installed to warn motorists of the series of sharp bends at this location on the R425 in the coming weeks

Notice of Motion No: 176/2019

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

“That this Council carry out essential drainage works at house at Spink on both sides of the road”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that Mr. Wes Wilkinson, S.E.E., will meet with Councillor Fennelly to examine this location, and arrange to carry out repair works as appropriate.

Notice of Motion No: 177/2019

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

“That this Council upgrade the pedestrian crossing in Ballinakill as the lights and the road surface is very poor”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird. The Members were advised that this pedestrian crossing will be reviewed and considered for upgrades of poles and flashing lights in 2020 programme of works. The Portlaoise MD Office will carry out repairs to the road surface in the coming weeks.

Notice of Motion No: 178/2019

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

“That this Council install street markings at Stanhope Street, Ballinakill”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird. The Members were advised that the Portlaoise MD Office will reinstate the road markings at this location in early 2020.

Notice of Motion No: 179/2019 & 190/2019 were taken together as follows:

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council give an update on the proposed Triogue Blue-Way”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Thomasina Connell.

Councillor Thomasina Connell proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council provides an update in relation to the River Triogue Blueway Cycleway and an anticipated completion date”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that Funding for the Triogue Blu Way (€650,000) was approved late 2018 and approved mid 2019 under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund. The Triogue BluWay is a walkway/cycle path that extends from Greenhill Lane/Triogue Linear Park through to the Portlaoise Southern Circular Road. Part of the route of the BlueWay is adjacent to a proposed natural heritage area (pNHA), the Ridge of Portlaoise. Ecological assessments and information gathering have been ongoing since 2018 with a view to developing plans for the BlueWay that avoid, minimise and/or mitigate impacts of the BlueWay on blue fleabane, a rare plant species and one of the principal reasons for which the Ridge of Portlaoise has been proposed for designation as a pNHA.

A brief for the appointment of consultants to advance the detailed design of the Scheme has been prepared and the detailed design will progress over the first half of 2020 with a view to applying for a planning consent in the appropriate fashion by mid 2020. The delivery date is dependent on the granting of the planning consent but it is hoped to have elements of the BlueWay in place by the end of 2020 and for the BlueWay to be fully in place by end 2021.

Notice of Motion No: 180/2019

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council seek funding to refurbish the maisonettes on Harpur’s Lane and also a maintenance programme for Triogue Place”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley. The Members were advised that a condition survey of the maisonettes on Harpurs Lane will be arranged to establish what refurbishment works are required and a site investigation of Triogue Place will be arranged to establish what maintenance works are required. Once condition survey and site investigations are complete an assessment of available funding will be carried out.

Notice of Motion No: 181/2019

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council install a pedestrian crossing at the Tower Hill side of Dunamase”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley. The Members were advised that as part of the URDF approved funding a pedestrian crossing will be provided at Tower Hill, subject to design considerations, and with a view to being in place by September 2020 as discussed and agreed by LOETB management.

Notice of Motion No: 182/2019

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

“That this Council give an update on progress made to take Millbrook Estate in charge”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird. The Members were advised that CCTV Survey was completed which highlighted a number of issues which need to be remedied i.e. silting up of surface water system. Foul sewer requires 2no manholes, one at the end of each line. These traverse a very narrow space (alleyway at back of houses) and will be very difficult to remedy. Benching is also required for manholes. A site resolution plan with Irish Water will have to be prepared.

Councillor Stanley indicated that there are elderly residents in this estate.

Mr. Simon Walton, Director of Services indicated that he would have an update for the January meeting of the MD.

Notice of Motion No: 183/2019

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

“That this Council carry out a safety audit on the roundabout at Fieldbrook Estate”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that The Portlaoise MD office intends to carry out Stage 4 Road Safety Audit of this junction in early 2020.

Notice of Motion No: 184/2019

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

“That this Council give an update on progress made with the application to secure funding for a sports hall in Portlaoise”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that in April 2019 Laois County Council completed a Needs Analysis Study on the development of a Portlaoise indoor sports hall facility. The study clearly outlined a local and regional need for such a facility. A suitable site and funding stream will need to be identified in order to progress this project.

Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley proposed that a meeting be scheduled with the Chief Executive & the relevant Director of Services in relation to this matter. This was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. Mr. Simon Walton, Director of Services to follow up this matter.

Notice of Motion No: 185/2019

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Portlaoise Municipal District calls on Laois County Council to convene a meeting for the residents of the Meelick / Timohoe Road to discuss traffic management measures in the area given the fact that the inner relief road is now open”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that Road Design Section will arrange to meet Elected member and residents of the Meelick / Timohoe Road to discuss traffic management measures.

Notice of Motion No: 186/2019

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Portlaoise Municipal District calls on Laois County Council to install green and white bollards at the entrance to Kyle Lane off the Crookey road”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Mary Sweeney. The Members were advised that green and white junction definition posts are ordinarily reserved for indicating junction locations on National Secondary routes.

Mr. Wes Wilkinson, Senior Executive Engineer will meet Councillor Aird on site to examine the issues at this location and make arrangements to carry out required works as appropriate.

Notice of Motion No: 187/2019

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That Portlaoise Municipal District calls on Laois County Council to put a continuous white line in place on the first crossroads in Pallas on the Ballyfin Road”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley. The Members were advised that Mr. Wes Wilkinson, S.E.E. will meet Councillor Aird on site to examine the issues at this location and make arrangements to carry out required works as appropriate.

Notice of Motion No: 188/2019

Councillor Thomasina Connell proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“That this Council erect bollards at the entrance to the bog at Kyletelesha in an effort to address illegal dumping”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Mary Sweeney. The Members were advised that the Environment Section has investigated this matter. This laneway is an access road onto the bog and serves at least 12 different landholdings. Also, this roadway is used by a contractor to access the bog for peat extraction works.

From the Environment Section’s investigation online with the Land Registry, there is a right-of-way in existence along this roadway. The bog can be accessed from other roadways but as there is a right-of-way along this road the Environment Section has no proposal at present to erect bollards at the entrance to this roadway. The Environment Section will monitor this roadway for illegal dumping activities.

Notice of Motion No: 189/2019

Councillor Thomasina Connell proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

“ That this Council improve the signage at the entrance to the River Triogue Linear Park, Green Mill Lane, Portlaoise, Co. Laois to encourage use of this green space”

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird. The Members were advised that the Portlaoise MD Office will examine the signage at this location and make arrangements to carry out required works as appropriate.

4. Correspondence

Correspondence from the Office of the Local Returning Officer dated the 25th of November in relation to polling stations was circulated and discussed.

5. Best Wishes

Councillor Willie Aird expressed a vote of best wishes to Mr. Brian Bruno McCormack on his recent retirement. It was agreed that a letter would issue wishing Brian well and congratulating Brian on his wonderful achievements during his 20 year career with Portlaoise and receiving 15 senior football medals, one senior hurling medal and two Leinster Club Football medals

8. Fix Time, Date & Venue for the next meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on 15th of January **2020** at 11.00 a.m. in the Council Chamber.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:

John Joe Fennelly, Cathaoirleach