

**MINUTES OF THE PORTLAOISE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY  
15<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2020 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.  
Mr. Noel Tuohy, M.C.C.

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

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER MEETING OF PORTLAOISE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT HELD ON THE 11<sup>TH</sup> OF DECEMBER 2019**

On the proposal of Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald, the minutes of the December meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> of December 2019 were confirmed as circulated.

**2. MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING HELD ON THE 11<sup>TH</sup> OF DECEMBER 2020**

Councillor Fitzgerald raised the matter of the issuing of parking fines for Jessop Court – Mr. Simon Walton, Director of Services indicated that, based on the current bye-laws, parking in Jessop’s Court is restricted to vehicles displaying a valid resident’s parking permit only. It was noted that the taking in charge of Hynds Square is being tabled on the January agenda and relates to a pedestrianised area, separate to Jessop’s Court. A review of parking provisions in Jessop’s Court is ongoing.

**3. NOTICE OF MOTIONS**

**Notice of Motion No: 01/2020**

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

*“That this Council outline their plans for the much needed new Roundabout at Rockview Estate”*

This Notice of motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird. The Members were advised that a Part VIII was approved for this roundabout and Road Safety Audit Stages 1 & 2 were carried out. An unsuccessful funding application was made to DTTAS in 2019. This application remains current and the Roads section is hopeful that funding will be granted in 2020.

Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley referred to money which was ringfenced for these works in the region of €300,000. Mr. Simon Walton, Director of Services confirmed that Laois County Council is reliant on an allocation from the Department of Transport to fund any works. Mr. Walton is to follow up on the matter with a view to upgrading the current temporary arrangement and provide clarity on the matter of funding.

#### Notice of Motion No: 02/2020

Caroline Dwane Stanley proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That this Council give an update on plans to install parking bays at the front of St. Brigid’s Place and also the re-surfacing of the remainder of the back lanes”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that The Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport operate and administer funding for the repair and upgrade of local roads under The Community Involvement Scheme (CIS). Community Involvement Schemes (CIS) are joint ventures between the community and Laois County Council, aimed at improving the quality of public roads which are in need of repair. A 15% percent contribution from the local community is required towards the total cost of the works. An application for funding for the installation of parking bays in St Brigid’s Place was submitted to DTTaS in late 2019. LCC is awaiting confirmation of funding for successful schemes in 2020. It is expected that this may be confirmed by Q1/Q2 2020. An application for funding the resurfacing of the remainder of the rear access lanes in St Brigid’s Place will be submitted in 2020, with a view to obtaining funding for 2021.

Councillor Dwane Stanley requested that a temporary works be carried out in the interim.

#### Notice of Motion No: 03/2020

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

***“That this Council re-surface the Abbeyleix Road from Meelick into O’ Moore Park and mark the parking bays”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that on Thursday 19/12/2019 Laois County Council was advised of the 2020 National Roads Allocations. Following detailed discussions between Laois County Council and TII, €900,000 has been provided to, amongst other matters, upgrade the existing pavement on that stretch of the N77 extending from the M7 Interchange to the junction with Fr. Brown Avenue. It is intended that the proposed scheme, aside from resurfacing, will include other pedestrian/cyclist/safety matters and a preliminary design process is due to commence after the appointment of design consultants. Any works in 2020 will be towards the latter end of the year to allow for design, planning consents etc. Full details of the TII allocations will be provided to Members at the January 2020 County Council Meeting.

#### Notice of Motion No: 04/2020

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

***“That this Council encourage Laois County Council to introduce pick up areas for salt and spreading materials for extreme bad weather conditions especially in the areas that are not covered under the salting programme”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley. The Members were advised that salt/grit collection points are only set up in the case of extreme weather events. The

public are advised as to the locations of these collection points through their local representatives, the website and various media streams during these events.

Mr. Simon Walton, Director of Services indicated that this matter could be considered by the Transportation Strategic Policy Committee.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 05/2020**

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

***“That this Council take down the old poles used on the school warning signs at Spink as they are in front of the new signs that were erected recently”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Mary Sweeney. The Members were advised that the Lighting Contractor has removed the old poles in the last few days.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 06/2020**

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

***“That this Council include the R430 Carlow Road and the Mountrath Road in its annual roads programme for 2020 – Carlow Road Thornberry to Kelly’s Farm Shop and on the Mountrath Road from First Ireland Spirits to Fosters Cross”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley. The Members were advised that these locations will be examined for consideration as part of the 2020 Annual Roads Programme.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 07/2020**

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That this Council provide bins for dog waste”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Noel Tuohy. The Members were advised that the Portlaoise MD currently operate a policy of "Any bag any bin" in relation to dog foul. We would encourage dog owners to always clean up after your dog, remind your relations, neighbours, and friends to do the same, take multiple bags on walks just in case, and use any bag any public bin or your own bin.

It was requested that a scheme similar to the one piloted in Mountmellick be rolled out in other areas to reduce the problem of dog fouling particularly in the town of Portlaoise.

**Notice of Motion No: 08/2020**

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That this Council take Broomville Close in charge”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley. The Members were advised that a Site Resolution Plan is currently being prepared with Irish Water with a view to taking the estate in charge in 2020.

**Notice of Motion No: 09/2020**

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That this Council try to resolve the litter problem at the back of the Shrine/Old Abbeyleix Road”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Noel Tuohy. The Members were advised that the Litter Warden removed out of date bins from the area. The Council sweeper will clean up remaining leaves today. He has also spoken to residents advising that bins must be stored in their own property. Laois County Council will follow up with an advisory letter.

**Notice of Motion No: 10/2020**

Councillor Mary Sweeney proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That Laois County Council address the ongoing problem of surface water at Green Road/Ballyroan Rd junction in Abbeyleix – there is a problem with surface water flowing down from the Green Road which crosses the Ballyroan road and then flows into a private residence due to the camber of the road”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. The Members were advised that Mr. Wes Wilkinson, A/S.E.E. will meet with Councillor Sweeney on site to examine the issue and determine the works required to resolve the problem.

**Notice of Motion No: 11/2020**

Councillor Mary Sweeney proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That Laois County Council reinstate the yellow box following footpath works done on Chapel Street Ballyroan”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. The Members were advised that this location will be included on the schedule of works for road markings in the coming weeks.

**Notice of Motion No: 12/2020**

Councillor Mary Sweeney proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That Laois County Council erect for a “caution concealed entrance” sign on the road adjacent to a house at Oldtown Abbeyleix due to a request from the resident – this is a very busy road as traffic from adjoining roads use it”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. The Members were advised that Mr. Wes Wilkinson, S.E.E. will meet with Councillor Sweeney on site to examine the issue at this location.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 13/2020**

Councillor Thomasina Connell proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That this Council address the level of heavy good vehicles coming through Abbeyleix to further address the traffic issue, which has now become a matter of public safety”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. The Members were advised that this matter has been subject of a previous Notice of Motion wherein it was agreed that Laois County Council would communicate with TII and Midlink – in this way a methodology of advancing matters was previously agreed and that methodology is still in train.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 14/2020**

Councillor Thomasina Connell proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That this Council attend at the lake adjacent to Glendowns to assess the flooding risk in light of the increased amount of silt following the level of rainfall over the last number of months”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Noel Tuohy. The Members were advised that the outlet of the culvert from the lake at Glendowns is regularly monitored and any debris or obstructions are removed as required.

It was agreed that Mr. Wes Wilkinson, Senior Executive Engineer would meet Councillor Connell on site to discuss.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 15/2020**

Councillor Thomasina Connell proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That this Council review the opening hours of the Public Parks in Portlaoise over holiday periods and in addition review the walking surface of the pedestrian path under the bridge at the Linear Park”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird. The Members were advised that the opening and closing times for the Parks are as follows 365 days of the year:

Summer Time 1st May to 30th September 8.30am to 9.30pm

Winter Time : 1st October to 30th April 8.30am to 6.30pm

The surface of the pedestrian path under the CIE bridge in the Linear Park will be reviewed as part of the forthcoming Blueway Cycleway Project.

A discussion ensued during which Councillor Connell also expressed concern regarding appropriate signage – Mr. Wes Wilkinson, Senior Executive Engineer indicated that new signage has been obtained and will be erected.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 16/2020**

Councillor Noel Tuohy proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That this Council repair the road verge on the Ridge Road opposite Moneyballytyrell”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird. The Members were advised that road repairs will be carried out at this location, the location may need to be considered for resurfacing as part of the 2020 Annual Roads Programme.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 17/2020**

Councillor Noel Tuohy proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That a ramp be provided between the new St. Francis School and Dr. Murphy Place”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley. The Members were advised that Mr. Wes Wilkinson, S.E.E. will meet with Councillor Tuohy on site to examine the provision of a speed ramp at this location.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 18/2020**

Councillor Noel Tuohy proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That this Council undertake to review and assess the situation at Kilminchy as there are more than 700 houses which would constitute a small town in terms of traffic calming, lighting and other safety measures”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley. The Members were advised that Kilminchy was built in last 15/20 years. Street lights were upgraded to LED 2 years ago and a pedestrian crossing outside O’Gorman’s was also constructed to improve safety. If any Elected Member has any particular issue which need to be addressed then Road Design can arrange a site meeting to discuss further.

It was agreed that a meeting would be arranged between the Elected Representatives & Mr. Wes Wilkinson, Senior Executive Engineer.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 19/2020**

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That this Council include in its Roads Programme a complete resurfacing of the road from Ross to our boundary on the Ballyfin Road”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that this location will be examined for consideration as part of the 2020 Annual Roads Programme.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 20/2020**

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That this Council under the guidance of Mr. Wes Wilkinson, S.E.E. request a meeting with the people responsible for the programme of works for the cleaning of the River Triogue in 2020”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Noel Tuohy. The Members were advised that the Roads Section is currently preparing the River Maintenance Programme of works for 2020 for sections of river which LCC is statutorily responsible for. Once the programme has been prepared it will be made available for the members at that time.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 21/2020**

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That this Council be informed of the up to date position regarding discussions with C.I.E. and Portlaoise Municipal District for the granting of planning permission for the extension of the footpath at Fr. Browne Avenue”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that Laois County Council have agreement in principle with CIE in relation to the licence agreement and the installation of the footpath at this location. Laois County Council are currently awaiting the final version of the licence agreement to be issued from the CIE Property Management Section - once this is received the formal agreement will be signed off on by Laois County Council Senior Management

#### **4. Correspondence**

The Members noted the correspondence from the T.I.I. dated the 12<sup>th</sup> of December 2019 in relation to a request for a meeting with them. The following delegation was agreed to represent the Committee:

- Councillor John Joe Fennelly
- Councillor Willie Aird
- Councillor Noel Tuohy
- Mr. Simon Walton, Director of Services
- Mr. Adrian Barrett, Senior Engineer

It was agreed that a letter would issue to the T.I.I. requesting that a meeting be scheduled for March 2020 and that an agenda would issue to the T.I.I. two weeks prior to the meeting

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

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on 19<sup>th</sup> of February **2020** at 11.00 a.m. in the Council Chamber.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
John Joe Fennelly, Cathaoirleach