

**MINUTES OF THE GRAIGUECULLEN/PORTARLINGTON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 13<sup>TH</sup> OF SEPTEMBER 2023 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN  
CHONTAE, PORTLAOISE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

**PRESENT** Mr. Ben Brennan (In the Chair)  
Mr. Aidan Mullins M.C.C.  
Mr. Pádraig Fleming, M.C.C.  
Mr. Paschal McEvoy, M.C.C.  
Mr. P.J. Kelly, M.C.C.  
Ms. Aisling Moran, 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 June meeting of the Graiguecullen/Portarlington Municipal District held on the 21<sup>st</sup> of June 2023**

On the proposition of Councillor Aidan Mullins seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy, the Members unanimously agreed the minutes of the June meeting of the Graiguecullen / Portarlington Municipal District held on the 21<sup>st</sup> of June 2023.

**(2) Confirmation of the Minutes of the AGM of Graiguecullen/Portarlington Municipal District held on the 31<sup>st</sup> of June 2022**

On the proposition of Councillor Aidan Mullins seconded by Councillor P.J. Kelly, the Members unanimously agreed the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Graiguecullen/Portarlington Municipal District held on the 21<sup>st</sup> of June 2023.

**(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) Killenard Business Incentive Scheme**

The members were briefed by Ms. Sheila Cahill, Business Development Executive in the Business Support Unit on the proposed introduction of a Business Incentive Scheme to encourage the use of vacant commercial premises within a designated area of Killenard. Ms. Sheila Cahill responded to the various queries raised on same. The Members agreed with the proposed scheme, and it was noted that the scheme would commence on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2023. Cllr PJ Kelly & Cllr Aisling Moran asked if this Scheme could be extended to the full County rather than just specific areas in town and village centres.

**(5) Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) Ref: 23/317809 - Coolglass Windfarm Limited - Planning Application to An Bord Pleanála**

Mr. Nathan Smith, Senior Executive Planner briefed the Members on the above planning application to An Bord Pleanála for the construction of 13 no. wind turbines at Timahoe. Members were advised that submissions must be made to An Bord Pleanála by 5.30 p.m. on the 9<sup>th</sup> of October 2023. Mr. Smith responded to the various queries but indicated that a Chief Executive's Report is currently being prepared on the SID which will be tabled on the agenda for the September meeting of Laois County Council scheduled for the 25<sup>th</sup> of September 2023 where the matter can be discussed further. Members requested that a map be made available also.

**(6) Notice of Motions:-**

**Notice of Motion No: 85/2023**

Councillor Ben Brennan proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That Laois County Council seek further funding from the Department of Transport this year for the L3897 from Monavea Cross to Gorthaile as this road is in very poor condition”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Aisling Moran. The Members were advised that this road is prioritised for improvement works under the 2024 restoration improvement programme. The improvement works will be undertaken at the earliest opportunity following the announcement of funding allocations in 2024 or earlier if sufficient funds are to come available from the Department of Transport. Municipal District staff will maintain the road in the interim.

**Notice of Motion No: 86/2023**

Councillor Ben Brennan proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That Laois County Council provide further funding for the purchase or lease of additional equipment for salt spreading in the Killeshin, Crettyard area particularly Rossmore and the Cuts”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Pdraig Fleming. The Members were advised that Laois County Council is currently investigating options to purchase and lease equipment that would be suitable for carrying out salt spreading at these locations.

Councillor Brennan requested an update on this for the October meeting.

**Notice of Motion No: 87/2023**

Councillor Ben Brennan proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That Laois County Council repair the gully on the road down to Doonane Church”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Aisling Moran. The Members were advised that Laois County Council can meet with the Elected Member at this location to review the scope works required.

**Notice of Motion No: 88/2023**

Councillor P.J. Kelly proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That Laois County Council install a pedestrian crossing in Ballybrittas Village as this would also help in slowing down traffic where 90% ignore the speed limit signs which are there already”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Aidan Mullins. The Members were advised that Laois County Council Road Design Department will investigate the possibility of installing a pedestrian crossing in Ballybrittas.

Councillor Aidan Mullins requested that a traffic survey be carried out at this location.

**Notice of Motion No: 89/2023**

Councillor P.J. Kelly proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That Laois County Council consult with the Department of Transport to investigate the possibility of positioning a roundabout at the junction known as Killenure Cross – several times during the day 4 lanes of traffic could be side by side at the junction resulting in accidents taking place especially as the speed limit is 100 km on this stretch of road.***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Aidan Mullins. The Members were advised that Laois County Council Road Design Department will carry out a traffic survey and turning movement county to assess the need for future improvement at the intersection of the R420 and the R445.

**Notice of Motion No: 89B/2023**

Councillor P.J. Kelly proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That Laois County Council freshen up the road markings on the pedestrian crossing on the Vicarstown Road, Stradbally”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy. The Members were advised that Laois County Council will include this pedestrian crossing on the works schedule for road markings.

**Notice of Motion No: 90/2023**

Councillor Aisling Moran proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That this Council give an update on the works to be completed at Sleaty, Graiguecullen regarding the new entrance and right of way”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Ben Brennan. The Members were advised that Land transfer documentation has been lodged with land registry to finalise transfer of property between the landowners involved. The works associated with this transfer will be progressed as soon as possible, subject to contractor availability.

**Notice of Motion No: 91/2023**

Councillor Aisling Moran proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That this Council give an update on the speed report that was carried out in Killeshin. Also please include the cost of the report”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Pádraig Fleming. The Members were advised that a speed survey was carried out in Killeshin by the road design section in July. The road design section is currently investigating traffic calming measures for this location and will provide an update once a proposal has been developed. There was no financial outlay to a third party for the survey as Laois County Council staff and equipment was utilised to undertake the survey.

**Notice of Motion No: 92/2023**

Councillor Aisling Moran proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That this Council give an update on the installation of the new public lighting for Killeen”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy. The Members were advised that the new public lighting columns have now been installed and Laois County Council is currently waiting on Killaree/ESB to provide the power supply to these lights.

**Notice of Motion No: 94/2023**

Councillor Padraig Fleming proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

**“That Laois County Council give an update and timing on the taking in charge of Crossneen Manor, Graiguecullen following the residents’ signatures handed in requesting same and also to include the finalisation of the new cable (Ref Public Lights Issue)”**

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Aidan Mullins. The Members were advised that a request to have this estate taken in charge was received by the Planning Authority on the 29<sup>th</sup> August 2023 and Laois County Council are currently validating the request from the plebiscite. If in order, the estate will be examined and costings will be prepared to finalise works, if any. As constructed drawings and CCTV will also need to be completed for this estate. With regard to the public lighting, the Electrical Contractor has submitted a quotation for the repair to the lights and has advised that the works will be completed over the coming weeks.

A discussion ensued regarding the bond on this estate. Members requested Laois County Council to implement a policy whereby there is a ten-year expiry on a bond and that the estate be taken in charge within this timeframe.

Ms. Julie Bergin, A/Head of Finance advised the Members that in some cases significant cash bonds are held back and can be utilised to finish off estates.

**Notice of Motion No: 95/2023**

Councillor Padraig Fleming proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

**“That Laois County Council give an update on the winter maintenance plan as regards ice, frost and snow – salting in particular in the vulnerable areas of Wolfhill, Rossmore, Killeshin and all hilly areas that are not including in the current rostered routes for treatment in the interest of public safety”**

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Ben Brennan. The Members were advised that Laois County Council is currently investigating options to purchase and lease equipment that would be suitable for carrying out some salt spreading at Rossmore and The Cuts. The Municipal District does not currently have the resources to consider any other salting routes beyond these areas.

Councillor Padraig Fleming questioned why resources would not be available for all the areas and requested an update for the next meeting.

**Notice of Motion No: 95/2023**

Councillor Padraig Fleming proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That Laois County Council consider the installation of small lay-bys at critical bends in the Coolanowle / Castletown area of Ballylinan as this will facilitate two vehicles meeting as a minor alteration on the edge of the road could make all the difference in the interest of health and safety”***

This Motion was seconded by Councillor Aisling Moran. The Members were advised that Laois County Council can meet with the Elected Member at this location to review the scope of the works required.

**Notice of Motion No: 96/2023**

Councillor Aidan Mullins proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That Laois County Council give an update on the status of the application for funding with the NTA for a footpath from Portarlinton Railway Station to Corrig Wood”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy. The Members were advised that NTA funding was not provided for Corrig Wood footpath under the 2023 Active Travel Programme. Given the necessity to deliver smarter travel infrastructure in urban areas, to cater for growing populations, the NTA are favouring schemes which deliver infrastructure to trip attractors such as schools, employment hubs and commercial developments. Therefore, the Council is not in a position to advise if funding will be allocated to Corrig Wood footpath in 2024.

Councillor Aidan Mullins asked if Laois County Council can provide any funding from their own resources?

**Notice of Motion No: 97/2023**

Councillor Aidan Mullins proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That Laois County Council give an update on the implementation of the People’s Park Master Plan in Portarlinton”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Aisling Moran. The Members were advised that a committee has been established in the Council to oversee the delivery of phase 3 of the People’s Park Landscape Plan in Portarlinton. A grant of €500,000 was allocated to the Council in respect of this project under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2022. The initial work of the committee will involve the procurement of a landscape architect to provide a detailed design for the works proposed in the park. Once a landscape architect has been appointed, a meeting will be arranged with the management committee of the People’s Park to enable them to have an input into the detailed design stage. The project is being overseen by the Town Regeneration Officer, Ms Denise Rainey.

**Notice of Motion No: 98/2023**

Councillor Aidan Mullins proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That Laois County Council provide extra resources and assistance to Portarlinton Tidy Towns Committee to help improve the visual appearance and streetscapes around the town”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy. The Members were advised that Laois County Council engage regularly with the Tidy Towns and have delivered the Main Street footpaths project and the installation of 11 solar compactor bins for the town centre area, in consultation with the Tidy Towns. The Council have also provided some tourist information sign boards recently, for use by Tidy Towns, in the Market Square and in the green area in front of the Leisure Centre carpark. On an annual basis, the Council purchase and sow the bedding plants in the planters around the town and maintain these planters by regular watering and weeding. Laois County Council also carry put grass-cutting in the public areas along with street sweeping, litter bin collection and herbicide control around the town.

**Notice of Motion No: 100/2023**

Councillor Paschal McEvoy proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That this Council give an update as to when EV Chargers will be installed in Stradbally”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor P.J. Kelly. The Members were advised that an application has been made to the ESB to determine the connection viability/requirements and fee payable for a location on the main street near the Garda Station. Once the ESB has confirmed same th

fee will be paid and the required connection works undertaken to facilitate the charger installation. It is expected that the installation will take place towards the end of the year.

**Notice of Motion No: 101/2023**

Councillor Paschal McEvoy proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That this Council install a speed ramp on the Garryglass Road, Timahoe opposite the Heritage Centre. This is necessary for safety reasons at the playground”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Padraig Fleming. The Members were advised that the Council can meet with the Elected Member at this location to review the works required.

**Notice of Motion No: 102/2023**

Councillor Paschal McEvoy proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***“That this Council give an update on safety works at Grange, Stradbally on the N80”***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor P.J. Kelly. The Members were advised that Laois County Council Road Design Department is currently in the process of reviewing the submitted tenders and will proceed to award the contract on the consent from the TII. It is intended that these works commence in Q.4 2023.