

**MINUTES OF THE PORTLAOISE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING HELD ON  
WEDNESDAY, 21<sup>ST</sup> OF FEBRUARY 2024 IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PORTLAOISE**

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

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr. Simon Walton, Director of Services  
Mr. Seamus Quinn, A/Senior Executive Engineer  
Ms. Michelle McCormack, Staff Officer

**1. VOTE OF SYMPATHY**

On the proposition of Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald it was unanimously agreed to extend a vote of sympathy to the McCormack Family, Dereen, Cloneygowan, Tullamore, Co. Offaly on the recent death of Mrs. Mary McCormack, mother of Ms. Michelle McCormack, Laois County Council.

**2. MINUTES OF THE JANUARY MEETING OF THE PORTLAOISE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT HELD ON THE 17<sup>TH</sup> OF JANUARY 2024**

On the proposition of Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly, the minutes of the January meeting of Portlaoise Municipal District held on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January 2024 were confirmed as circulated.

**3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE JANUARY MEETING OF THE PORTLAOISE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT HELD ON THE 17<sup>TH</sup> OF JANUARY 2024**

There were no matters arising from the meeting of the 17<sup>th</sup> of January 2024.

**4. Portlaoise Cemetery**

Prior to the Meeting, Members were circulated with a report (marked confidential), prepared by Sergeant Graham Kavanagh, Crime Prevention Officer with An Garda Síochana. The report related to recent criminal activity and anti-social behaviour in St. Peter & Paul's Cemetery. The report referenced various security, boundary treatment, public lighting and CCTV matters and associated best practice, to support crime prevention.

In discussing the item Members collectively condemned the criminal activity and its impact on families and the community generally. On the proposition of Cllr Aird, it was agreed to hold a Special Meeting of the Portlaoise Municipal District Committee, to be held on Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024 to have further discussions on the matter.

## 5. Notice of Motions

### Notice of Motion No: 20/2024

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

***"That this Council carry out road safety works to the junction at Ross Lane on the Ballyfin Road and re-surface the sections that are in bad condition"***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird. The Members were advised that the Portlaoise MD Office will make an application for funding for safety improvement works to be carried out at this junction.

### Notice of Motion No: 21/2024

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

***"That this Council give an update on the CIS scheme application in Parnell Crescent, Knockmay and to advise on a similar scheme in Clonrooske View, also the Council to clean up the back field and to give an update on the re-letting of the five vacant Council properties in Knockmay."***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Marie Tuohy. The Members were advised that a CIS application, for the installation of extra car parking spaces in Parnell Crescent, Knockmay was submitted in late 2023. The Portlaoise MD Office will assist the residents of Clonrooske View with a view to making a CIS application. The back field was cleaned up in early February 2024 where a large quantity of rubbish was removed from the area. The area will continue to be monitored by the Environment section (Litter Wardens) and Cluid Hosing Association. Cluid have plans to secure the site in Q2 2024. Vacant units require significant re-letting works, 4 units due for completion in Q2 2024 and 1 unit, in Parnell Crescent, due for completion in Q3 2024.

**The following two Notice of Motions were taken together:-**

Notice of Motion No: 22/2024 in the name of Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley

*"That this Council remove the tree on Crookedy road that's causing a hazard due to its location on the road and to remark the junction at Ballytegan"*

Notice of Motion No: 32/2024 in the name of Councillor Willie Aird

*"That Portlaoise Municipal District calls on Laois County Council to remove the dangerous tree on the road in Crookedy and also to complete the cutting of the evergreen trees in Liogard in advance of the bird nesting"*

The Notice of Motions seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that The Portlaoise MD Office will make arrangements to remove the tree on the roadside verge of the L-2115 at Crookedy near the property with Eircode R32 Y729. The Portlaoise MD Office Staff are currently liaising with residents adjoining the evergreen trees at Liogard with a view to getting the trees cut in advance of the end of February 2024.

**Notice of Motion No: 23/2024**

Councillor Marie Tuohy proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

*"That this Council review the entrance to Kylebrook Estate on the Abbeyleix Road and the ongoing problems entering and exiting the estate"*

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley. The Members were advised that the junction at Kylebrook is designed and constructed in accordance with road design standards. An independent, third party, Stage 3 Road Safety Audit will be carried out on the Abbeyleix Road Enhancement Scheme. The bollard, immediately adjacent to the Kylebrook entrance, will be removed.

Councillor Tuohy advised that motorists have concerns when turning right and motorists are crossing over the centre line. It was agreed that the Roads Department will review matters with a view to addressing concerns raised.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 24/2024**

Councillor Marie Tuohy proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***"That this Council facilitate the removal of the green in Clonrooske View to allow for a one-way system for traffic in the estate in the interest of safety and also the provision of additional parking spaces"***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley. The Members were advised that the Portlaoise MD Office will liaise with Cllr Tuohy and the residents of Clonrooske View to examine the request with a view to making an application as appropriate for funding.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 25/2024**

Councillor Marie Tuohy proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***"That this Council remark the pedestrian crossing near Brackens on the Stradbally Road and also the ramps along Summerhill Lane"***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird. The Members were advised that The Portlaoise MD Office will make arrangements to carry out road marking works in the coming weeks at this location.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 26/2024**

Councillor Barry Walsh proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***"That Laois County Council review the footpath leading from Junction 17 roundabout to Tougher roundabout as there are a number of trip hazards that need to be addressed and rectified urgently"***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that the issues at this location have been referred to the Motorway maintenance contract operator for their attention.

Councillor Walsh requested that Members be notified when these works are completed.

### **Notice of Motion No: 27/2024**

Councillor Barry Walsh proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***"That Laois County Council install maintenance free landscaping at the slope of the new footbridge at Glenbrook, Ballyroan"***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. The Members were advised that Mr. Wes Wilkinson, S.E.E. will make arrangements to meet Councillor Walsh on site to examine the proposed location for landscaping at Glenbrook, Ballyroan with a view to carrying out works as appropriate.

### **Notice of Motion No: 28/2024**

Councillors Barry Walsh & John Joe Fennelly proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***"That Laois County Council prepare a master plan for servicing (traffic management, water and waste) of the zoned land banks for residential development, enterprise and employment between the Dublin Road and Ballyroan Road, Abbeyleix and to have regard to all new applications for development on adjoining lands and potential of the remaining lands in the master plan"***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that The Housing, Planning and Roads Departments have met to discuss the future development of this land bank, with a view to developing a Masterplan which encompasses a number of uses – residential, community, commercial. Traffic management and servicing of the sites will be considered as the Masterplan is developed.

### **Notice of Motion No: 29/2024**

Councillor Thomasina Connell proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***"That Laois Council write to all shopping centres within the Portlaoise M.D. to ascertain whether they have breast feeding facilities and where they do not, request that a space be allocated"***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Barry Walsh. The Members were advised that a letter will issue in this regard.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 30/2024**

Councillor Thomasina Connell proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

*"That this Municipal District introduce a Coffee Cup Deposit scheme in the designated Low Carbon Town of Portlaoise to eliminate single use takeaway coffee and tea cups. In doing so the Council must ensure that all coffee shops, cafes and hotels are contacted, and their agreement sought to work together in order to reduce the huge number of tonnes of rubbish from the local municipal waste network"*

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. The Members were advised that Laois County Council previously commenced a 2Go Cup (Deposit Return) Pilot whereby the Council provided 400 cups to 6 café-type businesses in Portlaoise. Take-up levels for the Scheme are low, to date. There is an upcoming event by Killarney Coffee Cup Project on the 22nd March. Cllr Connell has recently accepted an invitation to attend this event, along with Climate Action Co-Ordinator and Environmental Awareness Officer. It is hoped that they will use the learning from Killarney to approach businesses in Portlaoise as their support is crucial to the support of such an initiative.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 31/2024**

Councillor Thomasina Connell withdrew the following Notice of Motion:-

*"That the Portlaoise MD provide an update on the implementation of the e-bikes scheme"*

#### **Notice of Motion No: 33/2024**

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

*"That Portlaoise Municipal District calls on Laois County Council to install pedestrian safety measures at the pedestrian crossing junction on the Main Street at Peppers Lane"*

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that Laois County Council are currently procuring the supply and installation of surface imbedded flashing warning lights to increase visibility and awareness at this crossing.

Councillor Aird requested that Laois County Council examine the possibility of the installation of a barrier, or similar, to provide a chicane for pedestrians coming from Peppers Lane.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 34/2024**

Councillor Willie Aird proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

*"That Portlaoise Municipal District calls on Laois County Council to repair the digital sign coming from Emo towards the Rock NS and to put in place traffic calming measures to slow the speed of traffic passing in the vicinity of the Rock NS in particular, for example rumble strip"*

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald. The Members were advised that Laois County Council will repair the digital sign at the Rock National School and review the current traffic calming measures with a view to supplementing measures to slow traffic at this location.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 35/2024**

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:

*"That this Council put measures in place to prevent flooding in The Grange"*

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Willie Aird. The Members were advised that drainage works were carried out in the Grange in 2023. I will make arrangements to meet Councillor Fitzgerald on site to examine the location with a view to making a plan for further works, as required.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 36/2024**

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

*"That this Council give an update on The Order of Malta premises"*

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly. The Members were advised that a meeting, with the Order of Malta, will be arranged shortly, to discuss their accommodation needs at Mountrath Road.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 37/2024**

Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald proposed the following Notice of Motion:-

***"That this council insist on a policy of no road signs on the ground at junctions/roundabouts"***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley. The Members were advised that The Department of Transport's Traffic Signs Manual sets out the requirements for the design, placing and mounting heights of various types of road signage across the road network. As safety is of paramount importance when choosing sign positions and mounting heights a member of staff from the Roads & Transportation Section will meet Councillor Fitzgerald on site to assess the areas of concern and thereafter take action as necessary.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 38/2024**

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

***"That this Council re-surface the road outside the Shanahoe GAA Grounds as there is constant surface water ponding at this location"***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Barry Walsh. The Members were advised that Mr. Wes Wilkinson, Senior Executive Engineer will make arrangements to meet Councillor Fennelly at the L-1652 near Shanahoe GAA Grounds to examine the issue.

#### **Notice of Motion No: 39/2024**

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

***"That this Council contact the TII to cut back all branches of trees overhanging the road on the N77 between Killamuck Cross and Moran's Cross, Abbeyleix"***

This Notice of Motion was seconded by Councillor Barry Walsh. The Members were advised that The Portlaoise MD Office will make arrangements to make



contact with the relevant landowners and TII regarding arrangements to have works carried out as appropriate.

**6. Portlaoise Parking Study**

It was agreed to defer this item to the March meeting of the Municipal District.

**7. Correspondence**

The Members were circulated with a copy of the response from the HSE in relation to Notice of Motion No: 08/2024 requesting the Midlands Regional Hospital to install wi-fi in Portlaoise Hospital

**8. Fix Date for Next Meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting will take place on Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2024.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cathaoirleach

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Director of Services