

## **National Transport Authority enters new contract for Urlingford - Portlaoise service with M & A Coaches**

### **First new contract issued by Authority since its establishment**

November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012

The National Transport Authority is pleased to announce the launch of a new bus service between Urlingford and Portlaoise. The service starts today (November 19, 2012) as Route number 828. It is operated by M&A Coaches of Ballyraggett, Co.Kilkenny, who won the Public Transport Services Contract with the Authority following a tender competition.

This Contract marks the first new contract entered into by the Authority since its establishment on December 1, 2009. The Authority has previously entered into direct award public service obligation (PSO) contracts with Bus Éireann, Dublin Bus and Irish Rail for the provision of socially necessary but commercially unviable public transport services.

The new service provides two round trips every day between Urlingford and Portlaoise via Johnstown, Cullahill, Durrow, and Abbeyleix and serves Portlaoise train station and Portlaoise Hospital as well as Laois Shopping Centre. Onward public transport connections are available in Portlaoise towards Newbridge, Naas, Dublin Airport and Dublin City. Connections are also available at Urlingford for journeys towards Cashel, Cahir and Cork City.

“This new service is being introduced following commercial decisions by both Aircoach and Bus Éireann to withdraw services from the intermediate towns and villages between Urlingford and Portlaoise. We identified that it was essential for these communities to continue to have public transport services available and are very pleased that M&A Coaches has commenced this new service today”, said Gerry Murphy, CEO of the National Transport Authority.

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Full details of the new service are available from M&A Coaches at [www.mandacoaches.com](http://www.mandacoaches.com)