To / The Mayor and each Member of South Dublin County Council

**Re: Corporate Plan Annual Report 2016 – Section 134 of the Local Government Act 2001**

Dear Member,

Please find attached a comprehensive report on the progress made in progressing the objectives and associated strategies of our Corporate Plan during 2016. As we approach the mid-point of this Council’s term, it is encouraging to be in a position to report considerable progress across all of our objectives to make our County a better place to live, work and do business. Before commenting on some of the highlights, I want to also mention the Council’s highly successful 2016 Centenary Programme which facilitated enormous participation in this national celebration.

In general the year marked the midpoint of not just of the council term, but the progression and transition of plans and programmes from concept and planning through to early realisation. This is particularly true in relation to our foremost priority of housing. Eight projects with a total yield of 260 units have been progressed through planning, four schemes have been tendered and will commence in January, with the balance being tendered in early 2017. Two further schemes at Old Bawn and St. Cuthberts with the potential of a further 83 units are currently on public display, while a Prior Information Notice has been issued in respect of a  potential joint venture mixed tenure development of up to 900 houses at Kilcarbery, and will soon be advertised for expressions of interest. Private housing supply has started to show a positive trajectory. The review of the County Development Plan and the Clonburris SDZ review now underway provide further certainty in this regard. An application has been made to the recently announced Infrastructure Support Fund for four of our key development sites at Adamstown, Clonburris, Kilcarbery and Ballycullen. A positive decision is expected in early New Year in this regard.

Economic, enterprise and tourism development are central to our strategy to grow the local economy and provide opportunities for our citizens. The €1.2m Business Support Fund which represents 1% of commercial rates, is being targeted effectively at supporting the SME, retail and indigenous enterprise sectors. The Marketing Strategy for Grange Castle Business Park has had a positive impact, with the planned expansion of three existing businesses and the development of two additional. The €20m upgrade of the adjacent Nangor and Newcastle roads will commence in January 2017 which will support the planned expansion westwards of the Park, following the completion of strategic land acquisitions for this purpose. The Clondalkin Round Tower Visitor Centre under construction will open next summer, while the Dublin Mountain Gateway is now undergoing rigorous environmental assessment. Studies of Corkagh Park and Rathfarnham Castle will surface additional tourism attraction investment opportunities for consideration in quarter one of 2017. Notwithstanding the need for new attractions, the quality of our existing villages and the general presentation of the county are also critically important elements of our offer. The Villages Enhancement Programme saw the completion of Rathcoole and Rathfarnham during the year.

Environmental quality and aesthetic presentation are key objectives of our public realm and environment department. The adoption of new Tree and Litter Management Policies during the year has guided additional investment in landscaping, tree pruning and planting, litter management and public realm upgrade. Public and voluntary participation in our Environmental Awareness, Social Credits, Green Schools and Tidy Towns Programmes, all contribute greatly to our sense of pride of place and community. Annually we invest over €2m in community support programmes including summer projects, arts initiatives, endeavour awards, community grant and initiative schemes, the return on which is enormous in terms of goodwill and volunteerism. Likewise community health and wellbeing is supported through a wide range of wellbeing programmes and infrastructure investments including libraries, playgrounds, sports pavilions and facilities all of which are detailed in this annual update. It is particularly encouraging that South Dublin was awarded “Healthy County” status during the year, a designation we intend to maintain.

The achievements during the year have been facilitated somewhat by a return to recruitment for the first time since 2009. Close to 200 new staff have joined the organisation in 2016, as a result of retirements and the recognition to increase employment to meet increased demand and the gradual return to a more stable economy. The everyday work of our frontline staff is fundamental to public service and expectation. In terms of personal interaction we handled 400 media queries, engaged with 15,700 followers on social media, processed 90,000 citizen queries and answered 190,000 telephone queries.

In summary progress during the past year has been encouraging and the detail set out in this report reflects positively on the organisation’s efforts to deliver on its Corporate Plan. While there are international considerations to our economic outlook, we can be reasonably sure that the immediate outlook is positive. In this regard I see no reason to alter or scale back the ambition of our Corporate Plan.

Yours sincerely,



Daniel McLoughlin

Chief Executive