**Corporate Plan Annual Report 2021**

As in 2020, the Corporate Plan achievements must be viewed through the prism of a year heavily influenced by COVID related restrictions and associated considerations. Notwithstanding disruptions, delays and the all-round challenges in both human and socio-economic circumstances, significant progress was made across a range of areas underpinning the core objectives of our Corporate Plan. The significant efforts of the organisation to continue to maintain essential services, develop critically important infrastructure and plan for the future, are a testament to all involved.

Across the organisation ways of working remained both flexible and responsive in compliance with health and safety advice and return to work regulations. Frontline services including public realm, parks, housing, water and drainage and street cleaning have had to adapt their schedules and work to revised rotas. Office based services have adapted to government advice with working from home applying to between 50% and 85% of staff at different times, as restrictions altered. While organisationally disruptive and personally challenging, it is clear that a hybrid model of home/office working is the future and the accelerated digitisation of services is paramount to achieving this goal, while meeting citizen expectations. We made some progress in looking at a future model of work in this context and will invest heavily in the necessary telephony, CRM and systems development in the period ahead. Financially, government supports to business resulted in commercial rate collections remaining stable. Other sources of income suffered, most notably rental income, where the challenges of lockdown impacted heavily on collection levels. Nevertheless, the overall financial position of the organisation remains strong and particularly so, with regard to our capital investment plans.

Housing continues to be our key focus of capital investment. Notwithstanding delays, 368 new homes were provided in 2021 but equally important significant projects got underway, including Kilcarbery which will yield 310 social homes. Likewise, plans were advanced for critical projects in Killinarden and Clonburris. These major schemes are central to our 5-year strategy to provide 3,707 social homes, which was submitted to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage towards the year end. In addition to new build, the Council also facilitated 802 new HAP/ RAS tenancies during 2021. We started our multi annual Retrofit Programme with 117 houses, funded by a €3.2m allocation from the Department. This will complement the Council’s own €10m Planned Maintenance Programme which got underway in 2021, following length COVID delays.

Investment in the social fabric of the County for current and future communities, is key to our vision for a vibrant and welcoming county. In this regard, we opened two new libraries in Clondalkin and Tymon, a major new €5m park at Adamstown, new play spaces in Firhouse, Willsbrook and Corkagh Park, together with teen spaces in Collinstown and Ballycragh. Additionally, we finalised planning approval for the completion of Tallaght Stadium, a new all-weather facility in Sean Walsh park, and the major redevelopment of Corkagh and Killinarden parks. In a first for the Council, we also secured planning approval for a new Intergenerational Centre at Tymon Park which will go to construction in Summer 2022.

The progression of our Climate Action Plan continued apace, with the commencement of the Tallaght District Heating Project, securing and spending €21m in cycling infrastructure, including Phase 3 of the Dodder Greenway and the further expansion of our urban afforestation and wildflower meadow planting schemes. We submitted a Decarbonisation Zone proposal for both Clondalkin and Tallaght and hope that the proposal for both will be approved in early 2022.

The upgrade and enhanced aesthetic presentation of the County continued, with the commencement of the Templeogue Village enhancement project, the planning of major works for Lucan Village and our first district enhancement project at Tymon shopping centre. The second phase of the N81 landscaping project was also completed. These improvements, underway and planned, are all part of our Economic Development Strategy, as is the expansion of Grange Castle Business Park, and the planned Innovation Centre in Tallaght town centre, for which tenders were received in December. Forward planning is also a key component of our Economic Development Strategy. In 2021 we published our new Draft County Development Plan for the period 2022 – 2028. We also commenced consultation on the largest planned urban regeneration project in this country, incorporating 700 hectares along the Naas Road, east of the M50. The associated “CITY EDGE” Strategy will be published and submitted to government early in 2022.