

## To the Mayor and Each Member

### Annual Revenue Budget 2023

Dear Mayor and Members,

The attached budget is presented in the statutory format and has been prepared in consultation with the Corporate Policy Group and taking account of the views of the Elected Members, who have been broadly consulted. Specific queries raised by Members have been responded to outside of this opening statement. The budgetary and economic context is one which has largely moved beyond COVID. It is nevertheless heavily influenced by residual issues around economic disruption, which have been compounded by the Ukrainian war, the continuing fallout from Brexit and world events which have resulted in supply chain disruption, inflation, energy supply issues and interest rate uncertainty.

These world events and associated challenges paradoxically occur at a time when our domestic economy is experiencing high employment, economic and demographic growth. The challenge both nationally and locally is to calibrate our response to support the domestic economy, while recognising the perils of inflation and financial uncertainty. In a local context this is reflected throughout this budget as follows:

- Having regard to current challenges for business and households, there are no increases proposed for local property tax, rates, or rents
- The retention and continued investment in front line services to cater for our ever-increasing population and expanding communities. Where possible, budgets have been protected against inflation, with an overall inflation provision of circa. €10,000,000, of which €4,000,000 relates to energy/fuel and €6,000,000 relates to materials and contracts
- Maintaining an emphasis on delivering our key priorities including housing, climate action, economic development, community infrastructure and planning for the future
  - Our headline housing programmes including Planned Maintenance and the Retrofit Scheme have been maintained, with the expectation that activity will expand as the contracting environment improves. The Retrofit Scheme budget has been supplemented with an additional €1,100,000 and is currently the subject of a full review to consider the potential conflicts between the priority of reletting and perfection. A report will be brought to the Strategic Policy Committee in early course
  - We will continue our proactive programme of climate action initiatives with a significant expansion of activity in 2023 provided for, including the preparation of a new Climate Action Plan, the commissioning of the Tallaght District

Heating Scheme, a comprehensive study on options for the decarbonisation of our fleet, a pilot study around solar panels on our community buildings, a similar study on a solar project on Arthurstown landfill and the roll out of Phase 1 of our plans for Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure. The Climate Innovation Fund of €300,000 has been retained to underpin these and other initiatives

- While economic development is primarily driven through investment detailed in our Capital Programme, additional initiatives and support have been provided for in this budget. These include further investment in our Town and Village Programme most notably, an additional €500,000 for Clondalkin village enhancements, €500,000 for the next phase of the N81 landscaping project at the Old Bawn Junction, the continuation of the €1,000,000 Business Support Fund, €1,250,000 to support tourism projects including the Dublin Mountains Visitor Centre and the Rathfarnham Castle Stables Projects, €500,000 towards the completion of Tallaght Stadium and a further €2,000,000 towards the Tallaght Heritage Centre. The 12th Lock Economic Development Strategy will be brought to Council in Q1 of 2023 and €1,500,000 has been provided to underpin “kickstart” projects on Council owned land, with an emphasis on enterprise, innovation and the arts
- As in recent years there is an emphasis on provisions related to the funding of community infrastructure, including an additional €1,500,000 for library development, €1,000,000 for the development of Citywest Community Centre, €500,000 for St Cuthberts Park, €300,000 each to start implementing plans for Jobstown and Quarryvale Parks, an additional €500,000 for Whitestown Stream and €1,000,000 towards the Astro Pitch Programme
- Considering increased responsibilities across areas such as planning, housing, climate action, the maintenance of new facilities, the need to support an expanding population and to continuously improve service quality, additional financial support has been included to increase staff resources and accelerate digitisation
  - A comprehensive organisational capacity study and workforce plan has been completed having been delayed by COVID. In summary, an additional 100 staff are required across the organisation over the next two years. This plan has been submitted for approval and is the subject of ongoing discussion. To support the implementation of this workforce plan, an additional €2,900,000 has been provided to support additional employment in 2023
- The continued support and voluntary effort of our communities is critical to the wellbeing of the county. All current supports and financial assistance schemes have been retained, as well as additional supports for sports, community centres, arts, libraries, social inclusion, age friendly initiatives and childhood development, all of which is detailed in the budget commentaries of the various Directorates. As requested by Members, an additional €500,000 has been provided to support community centres, while €300,000 has been provided to support initiatives arising from the planned publication of our first Local Sports Strategy next year

- As in previous years we have used additional financial capacity to invest in the future of the County and support the acceleration of much needed community and economic infrastructure delivery as outlined above

The Budget as presented is progressive and mindful of the challenges ahead, including resourcing and cost increases associated with inflation. It seeks to protect and enhance service delivery, promote economic development, accelerate community provision with due regard to national priorities. As always, I want to sincerely thank the Corporate Policy Group, the expanded Council membership and particularly Ronan FitzGerald, Head of Finance and his team for the advice, support and hard work involved in the preparation of this Budget, which I am happy to commend for adoption.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Daniel McLoughlin', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Daniel McLoughlin  
Chief Executive