PRESS RELEASE
July 11, 2017

An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar launches Creative Ireland Fingal Programme 2017
Taoiseach Leo Varadkar, a former Fingal County Councillor, launched the Creative Ireland Fingal Programme yesterday evening, July 10. Hosted in Swords Castle, the event celebrated the new major culture and creativity initiative designed to promote individual, community and national well-being.

Speaking in Swords An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar said: “I am delighted to be here this evening to launch the Creative Ireland – Fingal Culture and Creativity Plan 2017. By connecting experiences and creating new things with this Creative Ireland Programme, you the people of Fingal are channelling the power of creativity to the service of our communities and our society.”

He continued: “The Programme aims to join up and connect experiences in every county in Ireland. We are building on so much that has been done in previous years, a rich heritage of creativity and cultural expression that holds its own on the world stage. I would like to congratulate the Fingal Culture Team on this Plan. They have put together a broad and interesting programme which both draws on, and reflects, the great creative and cultural fabric in the Fingal area and I know it will be very successful here over the coming months.”

Mayor of Fingal, Cllr. Mary McCamley commented: “Inspired by the success of last year’s 1916 centenary celebrations, I hope that our citizens will embrace this new Creative Ireland Programme in the same way. We hope to harness creativity, which we know thrives within our communities, using it to make Fingal an even better place to live, work, visit and do business in.”

The Chief Executive of Fingal County Council, Paul Reid, said: “Our greatest resource is our people. With the third biggest, fastest growing and youngest population in Ireland, our county is also vibrant with diversity. The Council supports cultural development and has exciting plans for a new Civic and Cultural Centre in Swords. This will be a centre of excellence for the arts and creativity in the Swords areas and environs.”
Fingal County Council is acknowledged as one of the leaders in the field of Public Art Commissioning in Ireland. Building on this commitment to Public Art, Cllr McCamley announced details of two new initiatives – Fingal's Creative Culture Fund and Infrastructure 2017 – 2021.

The Creative Culture Fund is an exciting opportunity open to artists from all disciplines. Centred on identity, culture and citizenship, the Creative Ireland Programme is dedicated to providing meaningful support to artists. Grant applications of up to €1,500 are being invited under the Creative Culture Fund scheme. Applications are open until December 2017 and will provide support to local groups to creatively engage and encourage community participation.

Mayor McCamley concluded: “Infrastructure 2017 - 2021 is the title of our new Public Art programme which is open to artists across all platforms. This will work to bring culture and art to the public in new and exciting ways. It will create opportunities for artists to work, reflecting how we live and the nature of our ever-evolving communities in Fingal.”

At the event, An Taoiseach was presented with an art piece designed by Castleknock artist, Michele Hannan, signifying the creative talent native to Fingal. Guests at the event were greeted by the spectacle of Extreme Rhythm drummers and Réalta stilt walkers and fire jugglers and there was a series of vibrant performances throughout the evening from Fingal's brightest and diverse talent, including Indian Family Club, rising star R&B performer Soulé and rapper Flynn Johnson.

Further information on the Creative Culture Fund and Fingal's Culture and Creativity Plan can be obtained by emailing creative@fingal.ie or calling 01 8905097.

ENDS

For more information contact:
Maree Rigney, Limelight Communications, maree.rigney@limelight.ie, 01 668 0600, 086 3587153
Kathryn Byrne, Limelight Communications, kathryn.byrne@limelight.ie, 01 668 0600, 085 233 6033