PRESS RELEASE

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MetroLink project to Swords must proceed without further delay, Chief Executive tells Council

Fingal County Council Chief Executive Paul Reid has insisted that the MetroLink project to Swords, via Dublin Airport, should proceed without further delay, regardless of any issues relating to the southside aspect of the route, to ensure it meets its 2027 completion target.

In his Chief Executive's report to Council at this evening's monthly meeting in County Hall, Swords, Mr Reid stated it is “imperative” that issues relating to the route from the city centre to South Dublin should not hold up the construction of the route on the northside.
“If needs be, the project should be divided into two phases, north and south, with preference given to the northern phase to ensure it is completed on schedule in 2027,’ stated Mr Reid, who first made the suggestion in an article for the Q4 2018 of InBusiness magazine.

Fingal County Council is currently waiting on Transport Infrastructure Ireland and the National Transport Agency to reveal their final preferred option following a period of extensive public consultation last summer. Their initial plan saw the original long-standing Metro North proposal being replaced by a longer route that now extends southwards from the city centre to Sandyford.

Mr Reid told councilors that the ongoing delays in relation to the publishing of the final preferred route had led to “genuine fears that MetroLink will not be in place by its 2027 target”.

“This is not acceptable given the project’s importance to North Dublin and the pressing need to link an ever-expanding Dublin Airport to the city centre and bring it into the national rail network,” he said.

“As we seek to leverage and build on Fingal’s key strengths in terms of our people, our communities, our built and natural heritage, and our existing and planned infrastructure, a key piece in our development jigsaw is MetroLink.

“As we enter a period where there will be a greater focus on our efforts to combat Climate Change the provision of infrastructure like MetroLink will become even more important as it will encourage more people from Fingal and beyond to take public transport. Anybody who travels by car, bus or bicycle from North Dublin into the City Centre any weekday morning will be aware of the positive impact that MetroLink is going to have on commuter traffic.

“But, for that to happen within the outlined timeframes, we now need a clear commitment that the Northern route is going to be prioritised because we are ready for it and we need it. And, when we get it, our future is set to shine very brightly indeed.”

AnnMarie Farrelly, Director of Planning and Strategic Infrastructure at Fingal County Council, said that the local authority has already laid the foundations to transform North County Dublin when MetroLink arrives.

“Fingal will be transformed by the arrival of MetroLink, which will have wide-ranging positive implications for the county, and I am confident that this eagerly-awaited and missing piece of infrastructure will bring significant benefits to
Fingal, and, in particular, Swords, with the creation of the Metro Economic Corridor which already facilitates opportunities along the route for high density, mixed use, employment generating activity with a significant level of residential development.

“In anticipation of MetroLink coming, the Fingal Development Plan 2017 – 2023 takes full advantage of the opportunities created by the arrival of this key piece of infrastructure. The identification and promotion of the Metro Economic Corridor and other commercial and residential zonings are of strategic importance to the economy and well-being of the County's residential and business/employment population.”

Ms Farrelly added that the significant stock of undeveloped land surrounding the MetroLink route will play a fundamental role in delivering housing and economic development and that it is Fingal’s priority to form effective and innovative approaches to facilitate the right development at the right location.

“In all, our Development Plan provides for 49,000 homes. The benefit to the economy resulting from the creation and expansion of communities is significant, and the attractiveness of expansion into areas is only increased by the efficient transport links that MetroLink promises.”

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Articles by Paul Reid and AnnMarie Farrelly on MetroLink are on pages 76-79 of the latest edition of InBusiness magazine which can be viewed at https://issuu.com/ashvillemedia/docs/inbusiness_q4_2018

Audio of Paul Reid speaking about Fingal and the MetroLink project is attached to this press release.

For further information contact press@fingal.ie