Fingal County Council

PRESS RELEASE

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Fingal County Council launches 11th Dublin Economic Monitor

Fingal County Council launched the 11th Dublin Economic Monitor in The Atrium at County Hall, Swords, today (Thursday, October 26).

The launch featured a Breakfast seminar on the theme of Why Fingal? – Living, Working and Investing in Ireland’s fastest growing county and speakers included the Mayor of Fingal, Cllr Mary McCamley and Fingal County Council’s Director of Economic, Enterprise and Tourism Development, Ed Hearne.

There was also a panel discussion which examined the main theme of the seminar as well as discussing the Economic Indicators and Brexit. The panellists were Dalton Philips, Chief Executive of daa; Rita Crowley, Country Manager of Alter Pharma; Anthony Cooney, Chief Executive of Fingal Dublin Chamber of Commerce; and Paul Reid, Chief Executive of Fingal County Council.

Explaining the findings contained in this quarter’s Dublin Economic Monitor and in the Dublin Enterprise Zone study, Benchmarking Dublin’s Competitiveness, Mr
Hearne highlighted the growth in job creation across Dublin and added: “Year-on-year, Dublin employment has increased by almost 10,000, and over the past five years, Dublin has increased the number of jobs by 13.1%, compared to an average reduction of 4% across the EU.”

After dropping to 24th place in the IMD Competitiveness Rankings in 2011, the current issue of the Monitor reports that Ireland has climbed to sixth place, its highest position since 2001.

The Mayor of Fingal commented on the decrease in unemployment rates across the greater Dublin area, saying: “We again see a reduction in unemployment rate in Dublin which is now down to 6.1% which is the lowest it has been in nine years.”

Commenting on projections that the Dublin region will reach full employment in 2018, she added: “This is remarkable given that it coincides with the recent Census data which shows a 70,000 increase of people living in Dublin in the last five years.”

The panel discussion produced an insightful look at some of the main issues affecting business in Fingal and highlighting many of the advantages of investing in the county,

When asked why Alter Pharma made Stephenstown, Balbriggan their Global Headquarters, Country Manager Rita Crowley explained: “A lot of companies overlook the north side of Dublin to do business in. This wasn’t a decision that we made lightly, we looked at a lot of buildings in South Dublin, too. Overall we looked at over 300 buildings over a period of two and a half years. Our current building is 48,000 square feet – we needed very big warehouse facilities and offices and as it turned out we were able to find this in Stephenstown.”

She added that the presence of Dublin Airport and Dublin Port was also an important factor: “We export over 97% of our products to the Belgian pharmaceutical market so we have a lot of exportation on a weekly basis.”

Chief Executive Paul Reid also addressed the issues of skills in Fingal: “Fingal County Council is continuously monitoring the kind of companies investing in our area and what requirements they have in terms of attracting and retaining their workforce. We are currently undertaking a skills strategy, to analyse the skills requirements across the county, from both the supply side and demand side.”

He added: “We are working with both the business community and providers such as the Institute of Technology Blanchardstown and Dublin City University in doing this. I am confident that with the young and growing population we have in Fingal, coupled with the right mix of skills that can be developed in the medium-term, we will have a strong pipeline of talent to continue to attract investment to Fingal.”
In relation to challenges that Fingal may face in terms of meeting the needs of its growing population, Chief Executive of Dublin Fingal Chamber of Commerce Anthony Cooney said: “The availability of housing will have an impact on competitiveness. People need to live relatively close to where they work. We also have infrastructure issues. If we look at Dublin Airport, we will probably see almost 30 million passengers coming into Dublin next year. We do not have the infrastructure required to handle this and we are putting more and more people into taxis on arrival.”

New Chief Executive of the daa Dalton Philips said he looks forward to working with Fingal County Council: “The daa has had an incredibly good working relationship with Fingal which is needed in business. We won’t always agree, but we’ll respect each other’s position.”

He also acknowledged the challenges that Irish businesses will experience as they face Brexit: ”There are opportunities: Our new Dublin Airport Central development is likely to attract a lot of UK companies who want to come here and there is also the prospect of duty free returning on flights to the UK. But these are overshadowed by the economic destruction that’s going to come our way if we don’t sort out or connectivity issues. The UK is our biggest trading partner and we need to be able to get goods and services to them.”

Further to the economic factors, Anthony Cooney also highlighted the quality of life available in Fingal: “With 90 kilometres of coastline and 12 beaches as well as plenty of parks including Newbridge Farm and Malahide Castle. There is so much to do here from a natural perspective.”


Fingal County Council’s report, *Benchmarking Dublin’s Competitiveness*, can be downloaded at:

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For further information please contact press@fingal.ie

Photo Caption: Fingal County Council’s Director of Economic, Enterprise and Tourism Development, Ed Hearne, Chief Executive of Fingal Dublin Chamber of Commerce, Anthony Cooney, Alter Pharma Country Manager, Rita Crowley, Mayor of Fingal, Cllr Mary McCamley, Chief Executive of the daa, Dalton Philips and Fingal County Council’s Chief Executive, Paul Reid at the launch of this year’s Dublin Economic Monitor at The Atrium in County Hall, Swords.

For a higher resolution version of this photo and other photos from this event please contact press@fingal.ie