



Oifig Luachála
Valuation Office

Strategic Plan 2021 - 2023



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Foreword

by Commissioner of Valuation



Section 4 of the Public Service Management Act 1997 requires the Valuation Office to prepare and submit a strategy statement within six months of the appointment of a new Minister of the Government having charge of the Office. It is my privilege to present this Strategic Plan to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, which outlines the key strategies and goals of our organisation for the period 2021 to 2023.

The preparation of a new Strategic Plan has provided a timely opportunity for our stakeholders and ourselves to reflect on the direction that our organisation should take over the next three years. We have used the occasion to redefine our vision for the Office and to reconsider the values that should underpin the work that we do. Arising from this, we have developed a strategy based on a set of themes linked to specific goals and priority actions. These will be delivered through detailed business plans that all of our teams will prepare and implement each year, and we will keep track of the progress we have achieved through our reporting processes, including our Annual Reports. We will also prepare a new Customer Service Action Plan and Customer Charter that will reflect the timeframe of this strategic plan.

As this plan demonstrates, we will continue to build on the achievements and successes of recent years. Over the lifetime of our previous Strategic Plan (2018 to 2020), we undertook an ambitious programme of organisational development in association with the successful roll-out of Revaluation, an ongoing programme of Revision and an increasing amount of State property valuation work. Completion of the first full iteration of the National Revaluation Programme - the first of its kind since the middle of the nineteenth century - will continue to be

a cornerstone of our work over the next three years. We will also implement a programme of measures resulting in a more effective Revision service for our stakeholders over the life of this plan. In addition, the circumstances now exist for us to seek new opportunities and extend the role of the Office, for the first time in recent times.

We will also continue our programme of change and renewal. This will include building our capacity and strengthening our organisation further, continuing to adopt more innovative ways of working, exploiting a wider range of information sources, taking full advantage of modern technologies and implementing best international practice in how we deliver our services. This plan also sets out our commitments in ensuring that our organisation will continue to be governed to the highest standards and outlines our work in supporting the establishing of Tailte Éireann from the planned merger of the Office with the Property Registration Authority and Ordnance Survey Ireland.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the contributions of our stakeholders in the development of this strategic plan. I also want to acknowledge the talent, drive and commitment of my colleagues in the Valuation Office, each of whom is responsible for delivering this strategy. Their commitment, and our close working relationship with our stakeholders, is critical to the ongoing success of our organisation.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John O'Sullivan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'J' and 'S'.

John O'Sullivan
Commissioner of Valuation
December 2020

Our Work

We are an independent Office of Government staffed by civil servants and headed by the Commissioner of Valuation. The core business of our organisation is to provide ratepayers and Local Authorities with accurate, up-to-date valuations of commercial and industrial properties. These valuations are integral to the commercial rating system in Ireland, and form the basis for levying over €1.5 billion of local government revenue each year.

We also provide professional valuation services to various Government Departments, State agencies and other public bodies, including open-market capital and rental valuations and valuations for rent review purposes.

We are custodians of an archive of unique records that provide information and insights into the social history of Ireland covering the period from 1850 to 1990. These records provide an invaluable resource for genealogical and historical research.

Our Mission and Vision



Our Mission is

to deliver an impartial and trusted property valuation service, in an efficient manner, to support the Government of Ireland



Our Vision is

to be an organisation of excellence, delivering all of our services to the highest standards

Our Values

Commitment to Excellence

We are dedicated to delivering high quality services, in a sustainable manner, for the benefit of citizens and other stakeholders.

Collaboration

We recognise that positive relationships and teamwork, with our colleagues and partners, are central to delivering on our commitments.

Flexibility

We embrace innovation and continually improve our systems and processes to achieve better outcomes.

Integrity and Accountability

We work in an impartial and transparent manner, and are each accountable for what we do. We communicate honestly and openly with each other, and with the individuals and organisations with whom we interact.

Respect

We embrace equality, diversity and inclusiveness. We support an environment where people are treated with dignity and valued for their individuality.

Our Operating Environment

As an organisation operating under the aegis of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, there are many factors which impact on our work and which have influenced this Strategic Plan. Firstly, we must take full cognisance of the role our Office plays in implementing Government policy. Accordingly, our strategy for the period 2021 to 2023 contains a number of initiatives to give effect to commitments contained in the **Programme for Government: Our Shared Future** in relation to the planned National Digital Strategy and the Local Government sector.

Secondly, we are committed to carrying out our mandate as set out in the Valuation Acts 2001 to 2020 and to operating in compliance with the **Code of Conduct for the Governance of State Bodies** and prevailing **Public Financial Procedures**. There are a number of specific measures in this regard set out in this strategy.

This strategy reflects the most recent Civil Service Reform policies and documents. This includes the framework of reform outlined in **Our Public Services 2020: Development and Innovation** (December 2017) and its three pillars: Delivering for our Public, Innovating for our Future and Developing our People and Organisations.

The priorities of the People Strategy for the Civil Service 2017-2020 - **Developing our People: Building for the Future** have also informed this strategy. These priorities are: Be an Employer of Choice, Build the Workforce of the Future, Build, Support and Value Managers as People Developers.

The **VO People Strategy 2019-2021** mirrors these themes. How our people are led, managed, motivated and deployed is a vital component in creating an environment that leads to higher levels of organisational performance now and into the future. Our focus as an organisation will be to ensure that people considerations are central to all our policies, and to our organisational structure and programme delivery.

The five key objectives set out in the **Public Sector ICT Strategy 2015** are addressed in this strategy. These objectives are: Build to Share, Digital First, Data as an Enabler, Improve Governance and Increase Capability. Furthermore, this plan fully endorses the **Public Service Data Strategy 2019-2023**, which describes a data ecosystem, including associated governance, for the optimisation of data management within the Government domain. This approach will result in benefits for both the strategic and operational use of data.

We welcome the recent publication of an **Innovation Strategy for the Public Sector** and the associated guidelines and supports developed by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. We will leverage these to develop and implement a set of innovation commitments that align with the vision, priorities and goals outlined in the strategy.

Our Operating Environment continued

This Strategic Plan has been developed during a period of unprecedented disruption brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. At the time of writing, restrictions affecting many areas of society are in place and Government is providing a range of supports for businesses impacted by the crisis. An initial three-month waiver of rates for businesses severely affected by COVID-19 was announced in May 2020 and the waiver was subsequently extended to six months. In Budget 2021, the Government announced an extension of the waiver until the end of December 2020.

The pandemic has also significantly changed how we carry out our work. Almost all of our staff are now working from home but the restrictions in place since March 2020 have resulted in limiting the range of valuation work we have been able to carry out for local authorities. It is very likely that this situation will continue in some respects, at least, during the early part of 2021, as we commence the implementation of this strategy. As this plan outlines, we will put a series of measures in place, including improved data sharing arrangements, in order to mitigate the impact of these restrictions.

At the time of writing, it is very difficult to anticipate the short-term outcome of Brexit and its impact on the rateable valuation system and, more widely, on the business environment in Ireland. We will keep this under review throughout the period of this plan.

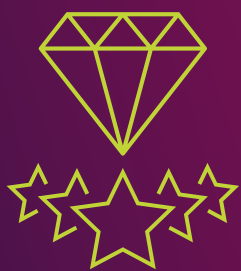
The difficulties posed by external challenges such as COVID-19 and Brexit require us to work in new ways, to develop new partnerships and implement new information flows. Over the course of this plan, we look forward to deepening our working relationships with our external stakeholders, including our Local Authority customers. We will endeavour to enhance our collaboration with other State organisations to achieve better public value. We will also continue to work closely with our colleagues in the Property Registration Authority and Ordnance Survey Ireland in making progress towards the establishment of Tailte Éireann.



Supporting the
Establishment of
Tailte Éireann



Serving our
Stakeholders



Driving High Standards
of Governance



Strengthening the
Capabilities of our
Organisation

Serving our Stakeholders



Serving our Stakeholders

We will deliver our services to meet the expectations of our stakeholders

Our Goal:
Becoming a
Data Driven
Organisation

We will:

Obtain, secure and leverage authoritative third party datasets to drive evidence-based decision-making

Transform our service delivery through enhanced data collection, processing and sharing

Deliver operational efficiencies through improved collaboration with Local Authorities and other stakeholders

Optimise the flow of relevant information between Local Authorities, the Valuation Office and the Valuation Tribunal, in line with the planned National Digital Strategy

Our Goal:
Delivering
Statutory Valuation
Services

We will:

Complete the first Revaluation of all Local Authority areas

Publish an annual Programme of Revaluation up to 2030, shortening the timeframes between revaluations

Eliminate the backlog of Revision applications

Implement new statutory timelines for carrying out Revision

Continue to deliver the current Global Valuations Programme

Our Goal:
Optimising Our
Operations

We will:

Contribute actively to the Government programme to streamline the commercial rates system

Develop and implement an Innovation Strategy that will give effect to the vision, priorities and goals outlined in the *Irish Public Service Innovation Strategy*

Support the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in a review of our principal legislation

Streamline the delivery of the appeal function

Review the range of public utility undertakings valued under the Global Valuation process

Our Goal:
Developing our
Business

We will:

Extend the scope and volume of State Property Valuation Services that we deliver

Complete the digitisation of and provide online access to our archive of historical valuation records

Deliver an innovative range of digital services to citizens, businesses and public bodies

Strengthening the Capabilities of our Organisation



Strengthening the Capabilities of our Organisation

We are committed to achieving the highest standards for our people and in our work

Our Goal:
Investing in our
People

We will:

Support targeted developmental and career progression initiatives to optimise the contribution of each member of staff

Foster a high-performance culture by supporting managers in developing and managing staff

Address issues that arise from the Civil Service Employee Engagement Survey 2020, through the internal Leadership Forum

Maintain a safe working environment for our staff and visitors

Our Goal:
Optimising our
Work Environment

We will:

Carry out an in-depth examination and review of our organisational and team processes with a view to optimising and redefining operations

Implement the recommendations of the *Organisational Capacity Assessment* to appropriately resource and structure the organisation

Determine and implement the future accommodation requirements for the organisation

Develop a policy of environmental sustainability across our workplace

Achieve a successful relocation to our new offices at the Distillers Building, Smithfield, Dublin 7

Our Goal:
Improving our
Technology

We will:

Implement a modern, secure and feature-rich ICT valuation system which will leverage the latest technologies and position us to become a more information driven organisation

Develop and enhance our datasets and systems to deliver accurate, secure and relevant information in support of public sector policies

Driving High Standards of Governance



Driving High Standards of Governance

We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of corporate governance and accountability, in line with our obligations as an Office of Government

Our Goal:
**Committing
to Corporate
Governance
Standards**

We will:

Ensure that our governance arrangements continue to uphold central Government standards

Work to eliminate any discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and protect the human rights of staff and customers in keeping with our Public Sector Duty.

Progress the implementation of our Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty

Adhere to *Public Financial Procedures*, in a transparent manner, as mandated by Government

Maintain appropriate risk management policies and procedures, under the guidance of our Audit and Risk Committee

Our Goal:
**Delivering
Accountability**

We will:

Continue to implement an effective annual Business Planning process

Agree Performance Delivery targets and implement Oversight reporting arrangements with our parent Department each year

Account to Oireachtas Committees and Government for the performance of our functions

Undertake an annual review of the implementation of this Strategic Plan

Prepare a new 3 year Customer Service Action Plan and Customer Charter, that will reflect the timeframe of this Strategic Plan

Supporting the Establishment of Tailte Éireann



Supporting the Establishment of Tailte Éireann

We will support the establishment of Tailte Éireann, with our colleagues in the Property Registration Authority and Ordnance Survey Ireland



We will:

Support the drafting of the Tailte Éireann Bill and its passage through the Oireachtas

Contribute to the development of appropriate governance, organisational and financial structures for the new entity



We will:

Collaborate with our staff in the lead up to and after the establishment of Tailte Éireann

Ensure staff are well informed in relation to the plans for the new organisation



We will:

Enhance the range of services delivered to the extended customer base using the combined resources of the three merging partners

Communicate actively with our external stakeholders throughout the establishment process



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