

Irish Association of Supported Employment launch five year strategic plan

The IASE (Irish Association of Supported Employment) launched its five year Strategic Plan, at the Mansion House Dublin this month. The plan was presented by Sligo native Dermot Cunningham, Chairperson, IASE and launched by Minister of State at the Department of Community, Gaeltacht and Rural affairs, Mr Noel Ahern.

The IASE is a representative group of organisations involved in assisting people with disabilities to find work opportunities. The aim of the plan is to provide a tool for such organisations and to co-ordinate activity regionally and nationally.

Supported Employment enables people with disabilities to find, secure and maintain paid employment in the open labour market. On the job training and individualised long term supports are key elements to achieving success.

In 2004 IASE secured core funding from the Government, under the white paper for voluntary services. This funding allowed the association to commence the consultative process nationally and to develop the strategic plan needed to identify the goals and objectives of members though out Ireland.

Attending the launch was Dr Jimmy Devins T.D. Commenting on the launch Dr Devins felt that this was part of a series of ongoing initiatives and spending commitments that will benefit people with disabilities in society. "In budget 2005 the Government announced a huge increase in funding to assist people with disabilities. Supported Employment is crucial in ensuring that people with disabilities can access quality employment and up skill for new opportunities".

Also commenting on the launch Deputy Michael Ring T.D. stated "I am highly impressed with the IASE and the plan presented, since becoming a member I am more aware of the difficulties faced in the area of supported employment. For many years disability organisations have lobbied for funding and additional resources for supported employment, what we don't need is promises we want real money for real people. Although a significant commitment was provided to the disability sector in the last budget, there is a relatively small amount spent on employment services for people with disabilities" He went on to say "I am committed to lobbying for supported employment and to ensure that any person with a disability can avail of a supported employment service to gain access to the labour market."

ENDS

FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT:

Sarah Togher
Development Officer
IASE
097 82894
086 8173631

Greg Barry
PRO
IASE
094 9043008
087 7988045