



Department of Social and Family Affairs

Northside Civic Centre Opened By Minister Coughlan

Mary Coughlan TD, Minister for Social and Family Affairs today officially opened the Northside Civic Centre. Statutory, voluntary and community agencies have combined in the centre to provide integrated services to the people of Coolock, Artane, Clonshaugh, Belcamp, Darndale and surrounding areas.

"This facility is a further example of the localisation policy operated in my Department of developing our services within the community we serve. Our range of offices in Dublin is a good example of this policy and we now have only two city centre offices, with another 12 serving the suburbs," Minister Coughlan said.

"I am also delighted that this office is open during lunchtime and provides a local service to One Parent Families, placing the Coolock Office to the front of all our network of local offices in adopting new procedures," the Minister added.

The Northside Civic Centre has a range of key service providers in one building including the Department of Social and Family Affairs, Dublin City Council, FÁS, the Citizens Information Centre, Money Advice and Budgeting Service, Northside Community Law Centre, the Local Employment Service, the Northside Partnership and its own radio station, NEAR FM.

ENDS May 19th 2004

Note for News Editors

The Department of Social and Family Affairs has a policy of bringing services closer to the public. It was evident that services available at the Gardiner Street Local office, an office outside the catchment area of its own customers, needed to be reviewed.

Other Statutory Agencies like FÁS and the Northern Area Health Board, along with the Northside Partnership and many local community groups, also saw the need for a suitable centre to accommodate all their various needs. The efforts of all interested bodies were spearheaded and co-ordinated by the Northside Citizens' Information Centre.

In November 1997, a Development Manager was appointed to the project. In February 1998, the project held a meeting with the statutory bodies at which a presentation on the project was made. Mr Padraic White, Chairperson of the Northside Partnership, chaired the meeting.

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Coolock Social Welfare Local Office opened for business on the 8 April 2003 on schedule serving the people of Coolock, Artane, Belcamp and Darndale.

A full complement of staff transferred from Gardiner St to the new Civic Centre.

Our Department have been actively involved at all stages in the project to establish the Civic Centre in Coolock.

Staff numbers from the Department of Social and Family Affairs number 40 serving just under 3,000 customers.

Other Agencies have 135 staff giving a total staffing of 175 for the Centre.