



NEWS RELEASE

July 25 2008

**Taoiseach opens new Social Welfare Local Office  
in Tullamore**

**Continually developing services for the community - Hanafin**

An Taoiseach, Brian Cowen TD, today (25<sup>th</sup> July 2008) officially opened a Social Welfare Local Office in Tullamore, Co. Offaly. The new offices, located in Castle Street, accommodates 24 staff who deal with claims for Jobseeker's Benefit, Jobseeker's Allowances and provide information on the full range of social welfare services offered by the Department.

Addressing over 100 invited guests and staff the Taoiseach reiterated the Government's commitment to supporting those most in need in society. **"The Government is committed to maintaining high levels of employment and a strong business sector. We must continue to create jobs and ensure that the people seeking work have the skills and confidence to participate fully when they take on those jobs. At the same time we have to ensure that when a person, for whatever reason find themselves unemployed, that they receive an adequate income to meet their needs. It is also important that they receive the supports and advice they need to help them to get back into the workforce.**

**This new office reflects the Department's recognition of the need for modern facilities that provide citizens with comfortable surroundings and a proper degree of privacy. It takes the place of the social welfare branch office which served the people of Tullamore and surrounding areas for almost 70 years. This is a fine building, it provides a facility which is more accessible and user - friendly to the public in the centre of Tullamore town. I'm sure the building has set a standard for the future. I extend best wishes to all the staff here and to the customers they will serve."**

The Taoiseach was joined at the opening by the Minister for Social and Family Affairs, Mary Hanafin, T.D. who said **"across Offaly thousands of people are availing of services from the Department ranging from Child Benefit, Back to Education or Work schemes, illness and disability benefits, jobseekers claims and various pensions. Having all of the services available in one office will ensure that there is a focal point for people from the Tullamore and Portarlington areas who are seeking advice on their entitlements and services available to them."**



## **Department of Social and Family Affairs**

---

The new Local Office, which opened at the end of May, has a number of Social Welfare Inspectors, a Facilitator and an Information Officer as well as staff to deal with a claim load of over 2,000 people currently on the live register in the Tullamore area.

Minister Hanafin continued **“there is a Jobs Facilitator based in the Tullamore office to work with people who are on the Live Register who are seeking employment or training opportunities. There is also an Information Officer to offer help and advice on the full range of social welfare services and schemes which are available to the wider public.”**

Tullamore Social Welfare Local Office is based at Castle Buildings, Tara Street, Tullamore, Co. Offaly. The office is open to the public from 9.30am -12.30pm and from 2pm – 4pm and can be contacted at 057 9325140. The office is one of 60 Social Welfare Local Offices providing services to the public throughout the country.

Minister Hanafin concluded by thanking the officials from the Office of Public Works and the developers for their efforts to create this modern facility for the people of Tullamore and surrounding areas.

**ENDS**