

Minister Haughey pays tribute to Coolock Adult Education Guidance Service at the launch of *Celebrating Lifelong Guidance*

‘You are inspirational and a credit to yourselves and a true testament to the success that is the AEGI programme,’ Seán Haughey TD, Minister for Lifelong Learning told Coolock Adult Education Guidance Service.

Minister Haughey was speaking at the launch of *Celebrating Lifelong Guidance* on behalf of the Adult Education Guidance Initiative – AEGI.

The launch took place recently at the Department of Education and Skills Clock Tower Conference Centre in Marlborough Street, Dublin.

The Minister was paying tribute to the Coolock Adult Education Guidance Service who shared their positive experiences with the specially invited audience.

The Report *Celebrating Lifelong Learning* looks back on the first six years of the AEGI which was a period of great development and growth for the AEGI and this Report is very positive about that process and that period.

Since its establishment 10 years ago, the National Centre for Guidance in Education - NCGE, the central co-ordination point for the AEGI has shown that it is an invaluable service to adult learners and has rightfully gained a well-deserved reputation for excellence.

Throughout the country, 40 individual AEGI services provide excellent support to almost 40,000 further education learners each year.

To date, almost 160,000 learners have benefited from intervention by the AEGI – this is hugely impressive.

At the launch, Minister Haughey said **‘This important report gives us a solid basis on which to move forward, to discuss where we can make improvements and enhancements and to recognise that much has changed in the interim.’**

‘It is vital to our shared mission that we continue to work together, in partnership, to develop a robust but at the same time flexible further education and training that can provide relevant and tailored opportunities to our learners.’

‘It is important to recognise that with changing patterns of work, in an ever more globalised Ireland, people need to upskill and reskill at every stage of life in ever more diverse ways.’

‘Guidance is fundamental to any learning process and to the choices learners make, and given the increasing complexity of these choices, guidance is now more than simply pointing the way forward.’

'It is about enabling and empowering people to make their own decisions and giving them the self-confidence and self-esteem to make choices about their personal and professional lives,' said Minister Haughey.

During the event, Minister Haughey took time to view a short film entitled *Celebrating Guidance and Quiet Inner Confidence* made by the award winning Irish film maker, Declan Cassidy and commissioned by the NCGE.

'As we launch this report my Department looks forward to the next 10 years, taking with us the very positive and collective experience of all concerned as key stakeholders in the AEGI service throughout the country,' concluded Minister Haughey.