

“Supporting the Development of Waterford as a Restorative Community”

Launch of Waterford Restorative Practice Network and 5 Year Vision Document
by Waterford’s Metropolitan Mayor Lola O’ Sullivan.

20th May, City Hall, Waterford.

There was a large turnout at Waterford City Hall for the launch of Waterford Restorative Practice Network (WRPN) and 5 Year Vision Document 2015-’19. Over 100 professionals from Community, Education, Voluntary, Statutory & Private sectors attended to learn more about this inclusive approach of working with people.

Waterford’s Metropolitan Mayor Lola O’ Sullivan acknowledged the contribution that Restorative Practices (RP) can have in contributing to making Waterford a healthier and safer community and thanked network members by saying,

“The network represents much of what is good about Waterford namely, people from various professions and agencies united in their attempts to make our community healthier and safer.”

Those attending learned that RP are a way of working with people that promote empathy, encourage positive personal behavior and build healthier relationships. They heard that the implementation of this Vision Document would lead to communities managing conflict more inclusively, respectfully and consistently with all those affected by harmful behaviour. Waterford people would be better resourced to repair harm when relationships were damaged but also in fostering healthier and supportive relationships by affirming positive actions.

During this launch, several presentations were made along with workshops that focused on how RP is positively impacting people across various Educational, Organizational, Justice, Health & Community settings. Dr. Sandra Buchanan, Co. Donegal Youthreach Co-ordinator, spoke on demonstrating the effectiveness of RP in Education. Claire Casey, Restorative Practices Programme Coordinator, Childhood Development Initiative Ltd., Tallaght, Dublin continued the theme with her evidence of how RP is impacting on communities. **John Boulton, Director of**

Training & Consultancy - International Institute of Restorative Practice – Europe, offered guidance as to how best to embed RP in Waterford organisations. Chief Superintendent Pat Murphy from An Garda Síochána provided attendees with many examples of how Waterford Gardai are embracing, embedding and benefitting from widespread use of RP. The final presentation by Jim Gibson, Area Manager, Waterford & Wexford, Child & Family Agency, Tusla, outlined the many synergies between Restorative Practices and Family support approaches and the improved outcomes for young people and families from integrating RP into current practice.

The people comprising WRPN and the organizations they represent believe that the broader use of RP in Waterford will benefit the people, the community and the quality of life for people living and working in Waterford,

“This approach can be used in all settings where we have interactions with people including Frontline statutory service provision, Dispute/Conflict resolution, Human Resource Management, Customer Relations, Pre-schools, Schools, Parenting, Domestic Violence, Youth Work, Social Inclusion Work, Early Schools Leaver intervention, Third Level Education, Community Development, Family Support, Social Work, Law Enforcement, Probation, Homeless Services, Anti Social Behaviour, Neighbourhood Disputes etc.” Ken Sauvage (Chairman, Waterford Restorative Practice Network).

WRPN’s Vision Document outlines the practical steps to be taken by the network and its partners to achieve the ambition of using restorative practices within all aspects of working, family, community and social life in Waterford.

This document can be downloaded from www.wrpn.ie or from WRPN Facebook account. Waterford Restorative Practice Network address is Block 4, Unit 2, Lacken Road Business Park, Kilbarry, Waterford. Informal enquiries can be made to John at 0879809985 or via email at info@wrpn.ie