

## Work Life Balance Meeting - Huge Success

Over 100 people turned up to the Work Life Balance Breakfast Meeting in the Tower Hotel on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> February – **Work Life Balance Day**. The theme was “**Attracting and retaining high calibre staff**”. The Event was hosted by Waterford Area Partnership and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, South East Region with support from the Equality Authority.

The meeting was opened by the Mayor of Waterford, Cllr. Mary O’Halloran who said “People today are under so much time pressure having to combine work, family and community responsibilities that they are constantly under very high levels of stress. Work Life Balance is something we should all be concerned about”.



Brian Meriman, Head of Communication with the Equality Authority advised the meeting of research by the National Centre for Partnership and Performance on New Models of High Performance Work Systems. This showed that progressive companies with effective Work Life Balance policies improved productivity by 14.8%. Other benefits for companies included reduction in absenteeism, reduced labour turnover, improved employee relations and greater innovation and creativity among employees.

“The positive outcomes for employees are heightened job satisfaction, improved life satisfaction and reduced stress” Brian Merriman said. He outlined the nationwide public awareness campaign undertaken by the Equality Authority this year.

Neil O’Sullivan, HR Manager, Waterford Institute of Technology outlined his experience of the challenges in implementing Work Life Balance policies in the workplace. “With commitment and flexibility the needs of the organisation and the individual can be both be met” Neil stated. He outlined the breakdown of staff in Waterford Institute of Technology by gender and age profile and explained that the needs of different groups of employees had to be met in different ways. “There is no one type fits all solution” Neil advised “it very much depends on the individuals personal and family circumstances”.

Work Life Balance arrangements are those forms of work that are designed to assist workers to combine work and family, caring responsibilities and personal life outside the workplace. These include **job sharing, job splitting, flexitime, term-time working, work sharing, part-time work, annualised hours and e-working amongst other work patterns.**

Further information on Work Life Balance policies are available from the Equality Authority, Clonmel Street, Dublin 2 or Lo-Call 1890 245545 Telephone 353 1 417 3333 Facsimile: 353 1 417 3377 E-mail: [info@equality.ie](mailto:info@equality.ie) website: [www.equality.ie](http://www.equality.ie).

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