Conference reviews a Century of Challenge and Change for women’s rights

The Blanchardstown Europe Direct Information Centre and Fingal Libraries hosted ‘A Century of Challenge and Change’, a conference to celebrate the centenary of women achieving the right to vote on Tuesday March 13 in Castleknock Hotel.

The conference also formed part of Fingal County Council’s Creative Ireland Programme and was designed to highlight the evolving role of women in Irish politics and society.

Speakers included Dr Theresa Reidy, Political Scientist in the Department of Government at University College Cork; Senator Ivana Bacik, Barrister and Reid Professor of Criminal Law and Criminology at Trinity College Dublin; Professor Diarmaid Ferriter, Professor of Modern Irish History at UCD; Louise Bunyan, Digital Marketing Specialist with Smartfox and Ciarín de Buis, CEO of Women for Election.

While introducing the conference, Mayor of Fingal Cllr Mary McCamley said: “The tireless efforts of women’s rights activists in the last 100 years have had a huge influence in the growing contribution women are making to Irish politics and policy making. As Mayor of Fingal, I have taken inspiration from women who came before me and the challenges they faced in pursuing their ambitions. Through their efforts, they brought about change and it is
essential that we continue to push past the current challenges to bring about further progress for women of all backgrounds.”

The challenges faced by women’s rights activists and the changes they achieved in the last 100 years were the major themes of this conference. This event gave the speakers and attendees the chance to discuss these challenges and changes in a historical and modern context.

A wide range of topics were covered including gender equality in political representation to the way forward for women’s rights. The increasing influence of social media on the political process was also discussed.

Chief Executive of Fingal County Council Paul Reid said: “I am delighted to see continued progress being made in increasing women’s participation in politics and government. Further political representation for women of all backgrounds will contribute to inclusion, tolerance and equality which are extremely important to Fingal, its residents and local representatives.”

The 230 people present enjoyed the conference with a spirited debate taking place during the question and answer sessions.

ENDS

For further information, please contact press@fingal.ie

Photo caption: Siobhan Walshe, Librarian; Louise Bunyan, Smartfox; Prof Diarmaid Ferriter, UCD; Dr Theresa Reidy, UCC; Orla O’Connor, National Women’s Council of Ireland; Mayor of Fingal, Cllr Mary McCamley; Senator Ivana Bacik, TCD; Ciárín de Buis, Women for Election and Betty Boardman, County Librarian at Fingal County Council.