

Speaking Notes for Minister Katherine Zappone, TD

Launch of UBU, Your Place Your Space

St Mark's Youth Club, Tallaght

Monday Morning 16th December 2019

I am so happy to be here with you all today to officially launch *UBU, Your Place Your Space*, the new targeted youth funding scheme for young people in Ireland. This scheme will enhance young people's access to out of school supports in their local communities.

Through these supports, young people will be empowered to strengthen their personal and social competencies and achieve their full potential.

Today I am launching this scheme in the context of the existing excellent work and continued commitment of Youth Services, Education and Training Boards (ETBs) and Government Departments to support the best possible outcomes for young people in Ireland.

The process of designing *UBU, Your Place Your Space* has been based on the recognition that these organisations are the cornerstone of youth provision in this country and the work they do is invaluable.

I wish to acknowledge the crucial role played by youth service staff and the many volunteers who give so generously of their time and energy to help and guide our young people.

I am mindful of the significant role that the youth sector plays in supporting young people, particularly those who experience a greater burden of life's challenges.

UBU, Your Place Your Space will provide the robust, fit for purpose policy and governance framework to enable *all* stakeholders to do the best job possible for our young people.

It ensures a strong focus on promoting positive outcomes for young people, outcomes which are co-produced with the young people as they are listened to, supported and empowered. Importantly, it provides a strong, sustainable platform for investment in vital youth services.

UBU, Your Place Your Space sits within the framework of *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy for Children and Young People* with a particular focus on prevention, early intervention and targeted service provision.

UBU, Your Place Your Space will operate in tandem with the *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* framework to strengthen the support system around young people.

This launch is a milestone in our journey to improve outcomes for children and young people through youth services.

We have heard what you've been telling us, what the young people have been telling us, and what needs to be done. And we have acted on it.

We have co-designed every element of this scheme with you. We have worked shoulder to shoulder with young people, with youth work practitioners and with Education and Training Boards to ensure that this scheme is what it needs to be and does what it needs to do.

Throughout this process, it has been a priority for me as Minister to maintain continuity of services for young people.

This launch is actually the beginning of a new journey as we move towards implementing the new scheme in a spirit of continuing improvement.

It is crucial that we all embrace this approach of continuous improvement so that we never cease in our efforts to drive high performance and the best possible outcomes.

This means that we will be working closely with young people, with projects, and with ETBs to ensure that the scheme provides the best possible fit for young people.

The evidence is there to show us that the work you do is needed. The recent *Growing Up in Ireland* key findings that I launched last month are testament to this fact. Among these findings were striking inequalities showing consistent evidence that some young people continue to have poor outcomes.

If we are going to help more twenty year olds, and their cousins and brothers and sisters, and the generation that follows them, then we really need to take a long hard look at the data, and ensure that the work we are doing is evidence based.

This is something that *UBU, Your Place Your Space* has been premised on, and something it will focus on long into the future.

The next phase in our process of partnership and collaboration will involve the ETBs holding clinics in the New Year with the projects in their area to provide support and guidance in relation to the new scheme.

A crucial resource for all of us will be the UBU website. This website is already live and will host all the information you might need to be able to work with us on this scheme.

We have made a number of very important commitments as part of the implementation plan for this scheme. Part of this will be ensuring that the overall governance model is fully fit for purpose and improves the ability of youth services to deliver their work to young people.

This new scheme is so important. It is our pathway to quality, flexible, future-focused and sustainable targeted youth services.

Services which can make such a profound difference in young people's lives across this country.

With that in mind, it gives me great pleasure to officially, and formally, launch **UBU, Your Place Your Space**.

ENDS

***check against delivery**