

OPEN PAGE

Tonyrefail's FREE Paper since '95

Gareth Rosser, 19 High St., Ton., CF39 8PH
OP is online at: www.open-page.co.uk
email: gareth@basedinwales.com

The last word?

Dear Gareth – Open Page, I feel I must write to you and hopefully you will print in full the comments I am about to make re your Christmas Issue of “Open Page”. You are free to put into print all kinds of inaccurate accusations against me and I trust you will print the following as you state you have the community at heart, so maybe truth should be at the forefront of your editorials.

1. May I first comment on your “Thank You” editorial.

You state that “your community spirit and Open Page mean a lot to you and your resolve not to get too involved with anything locally was broken several months ago when the team, James Parkin, and Paul Stepczak aided by Lisa Jones as Administrator contacted you with their thoughts for a Newsletter” You further go on to state that because of that team your eyes were opened to the possibility of colour. This colour has now been drained out from you because of what happened to that “Team”. That team as you put it were highly paid individuals, perhaps your readers would be surprised to note that that office wage bill at that time totalled almost £90 k per annum. You say you broke your rules to attend the AGM and that the power point presentation was so powerful and inspired with genuine enthusiasm. Perhaps you didn't listen to members of the partnership who have been with it since its inception with regard to the presentation which highlighted everything that had been done prior to that team arriving at the office, and I must point out by one individual not three. Genuinely inspired individuals do not need to claim for themselves the work of someone else.

You should, I suggest, have got the whole story of the issues of the team not just an obviously one-sided view. (I could go into more detail here but I will only say get your facts straight before going to print). Many community groups were openly dismayed at the treatment they received from that office, and as Chair of the Partnership and also County Borough Councillor for Tonyrefail West I have to represent those community groups and residents when Tax Payers Money is involved. Again, I am sure your readers would like to know what the “sickness” bill totalled for that office.

May I now take up the point made by you at the full partnership meeting of Monday 30th January regarding a 2nd issue of the Tonyrefail West Newspaper. We as a finance committee met to discuss the cost of the first newsletter and were indeed somewhat taken aback to learn that the cost was over 2.1/2 times more expensive than any other community partnership newsletter in R.C.T. This issue also was highlighted (particularly in your “Open Page”) as dividing Tonyrefail East and West. We on the finance committee had to make the decision not to print further newsletters until we had proper written quotation from at least 3 suppliers and also to ensure that if and when the next issue was sent out it would bring the community together not destroy it as your “Open Page” had done and give meaningful information on what the Partnership was trying to achieve.

I believe in open discussion and indeed I prefer not to have to write letters but to demonstrate with my work at grass roots with regard to what I have tried to achieve since becoming a Councillor, I would also put my record of working within the community prior to becoming elected as a Governor and Chair of Governors at local schools, and other groups within the community – all I might add with individuals who do not get paid high salaries but do it for the community they live in. I also am prepared

to face the residents of Tonyrefail West in an open election perhaps you should do the same.

2. Now I go on to “IN YOUR TEENS” you again misrepresent the facts. Yes the Community Policeman had requested (and I assume you are referring to my letter to the Community Council when they passed on the request by our Community Policeman for a “Shelter” at the rear of the Leisure Centre to enable youths to gather there. I pointed out in my letter to the Community Council that I have held meetings with Senior Police Officers regarding the problems at our Leisure Centre and when our Community Policeman suggested such a “shelter” the very senior police officer said “over my dead body”. May I bring some realism to your attention, I am sure residents of Tonyrefail would be interested in the money that has been spent at the Leisure Centre to repair the damage done by these youths, breaking into the Centre damaging equipment, damaging staff cars. Ripping out cables and smashing lights and damaging security cameras. The staff have the awful task after each weekend of cleaning up the debris from these binges, drug needles, broken bottles and even excrement. I suggest you ask the police for a report on exactly how many times they have been called to this site to try to control these Youths. All this has implications on our Council Tax, a point you seem to wish to ignore.

This Leisure Centre is for the whole of Tonyrefail it will eventually be the site for the new Library and refurbishment of the Centre. We have put the temporary library on this site and even this has been “trashed” by these “youths”. I must emphasise that the behaviour of these individuals does not reflect the behaviour of the vast majority of our youngsters in Tonyrefail and I do not have to justify to you the work I continue to do on behalf of all these youngsters in Tonyrefail West, I want the best for our youth and I will not let the activities of a few mindless individuals divert me from doing so, nor indeed someone who seems hellbent on attacking me with lies and innuendo.

3. I now go on to “Don't close our Nursery” I do not know what agenda the writer of this piece has but let me clear up some of the inaccurate information therein. Firstly with regard to the new Library perhaps the writer should eat her words there is a new temporary library as stated previously already insitu at the Leisure Centre perhaps the writer would like to write in again after visiting has this facility.

I go on now to the “closure of the nursery”. The writer states that “the Nursery is safe and sound”. This is a completely inaccurate statement. Yes there will be a new Nursery (an up to date modern Nursery) built in the grounds of the Primary school. The writer asks “will the new building have room for those children under three get prepared for school, will they have a link-up room where toddlers play and mums can chat”. We 3 councillors want the very best for our children and I am confident when the new building is complete they will have all the facilities at present in the old nursery but now in a building which is of a quality that we expect for the 21st century for our children who are our future. I am sure the parents of the pupils at present in Cwm Lai School are delighted with their new building as indeed are the parents of Hendreforgan. Let the children of Tonyrefail have these same facilities, lets not hold on to the past and please let tell it as it is and before going to print check all the facts.

County Borough Councillor Eudine Hanagan
Cabinet Member for Better Public Services & Transport
Rhondda-Cynon-Taff County Borough Council Tel: 01443 424039