



Barry Saul: the 28-year-old has had more political experience than most others his age

MOUNT Merrion guy Barry Saul has had more political experience than most others his age - he's gone through the elation of winning a seat and the disappointment of losing it.

However, the 28-year-old points out that he only lost his seat on Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council by a narrow margin at the last election, like his Progressive Democrats party colleague

Victor Boyhan.

He feels he has to run for office again, if only for the sake of the local people who believe in him.

"When 1,000 people in your area put a number one next to

your name, it's very hard to say no. I'll continue to work hard for the people of my area. If they reward me by electing me to the council it's a bonus."

Barry joined the youth branch of the PDs when he was 25, spurred on by a sense of outrage at the way he felt local residents were being ignored in the plans to develop the

PD OR NOT PD?

Silllogan area.

"At the time we were witnessing the growth in development in our area and I felt strongly that this type of development should be planned, phased and co-ordinated. It was during an oral appeal regarding the development of Silllogan shopping centre that my passion for local politics was formed.

"People were unaware of the future plans for their neighbourhoods and I felt strongly that the residents should be treated as stakeholders rather than as obstacles."

He is still dissatisfied with the way the area is being planned.

"I feel passionately that Silllogan village and Sandyford Industrial Estate will become a mecca of bad planning over the next number of years," he says. "The council and the councillors are letting piecemeal development take place without any coherent plan."

His decision to join the PDs also grew out of an admiration for mayor figures such as Mary Hanney, Liz O'Donnell and Des

O'Malley.

"I admire their integrity - they've sacrificed a lot personally. The way they [Hanney and O'Malley] left FF and set up their own party. They fundamentally believed that the way that Ireland was heading under Charles Haughey was wrong."

He was also encouraged to get involved in politics by his parents, neither of whom were active in politics but always voted.

Barry admits the PDs' "pro-enterprise philosophy" but says local government should be more independent so as not to have to rely on developers, who he believes ride roughshod over communities.

"There's a lot of bad ad-hoc development going on in Silllogan and Sandyford Industrial Estate is going to be a small town but there's no strategic plan for it," he says. He believes this problem could be alleviated by diverting a proportion of VAT to local authorities - a system that has worked well in America.

He laments what he perceives as the presence of "vested interests in local gov-

ernment" and believes some councils are "seriously lacking in quality people". To him, politics is all about serving the people.

"It's not about self service or serving the vested interests in society but about helping people of all walks in life," he says. As well as remaining active in his local community, Barry has campaigned strongly on national issues. He campaigned against the introduction of e-voting and has highlighted the problems of youth suicide in Ireland.

Since losing his seat on the local council, he should have had more time to devote to his job with his family's printing firm, or his hobbies, which include soccer (he plays and coaches for Mount Merrion), GAA and golf. However, he was recently elected to the National Executive of the Progressive Democrats and says he's not ready to take a rest from politics.

"I remain committed to working with people and voluntary organisations in my area," he says.

SINN FEIN: A MAGNET FOR THE DISILLUSIONED

SINN FEIN has always been a magnet for people disillusioned by more conventional political parties. So it's not surprising to find young people joining.

Twenty-year-old Dailin

cilliers should be out knocking

"Through studying history I got a national conscience," she says.

He also reads books which inspired him to develop his

iors in Dun Laoghaire, Edward Kelly, Dailin's grandmother was a Fianna Failor at a time when that party would have been considered more republican.