

# 1<sup>st</sup> Mayor Report

24 January 2017

English Version



**Ward 2 Forum**  
SERVING THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER

## **COUNCIL MEETING: TUESDAY 24 JANUARY 2017: ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR**

Welcome to the first council meeting of 2017. I trust all of you fully recovered from an exhausting 2016. We have entered our first full year as a council and many challenges await us. I trust that 2017 will be a wonderful year for all of you.

The Overberg matric class of 2016 had the highest district pass rate in South Africa, 92.7%. Congratulations to the district branch of the education department, personnel of the various schools, parents and especially the students. We wish the matrics of 2017 the best with their final year in school.

In my inauguration speech I said that the holistic municipal environment in Theewaterskloof changed since 2006. Initially we succeeded with municipal turn around and the establishment of good municipal governance and service delivery.

The challenges facing the municipality changed and currently we have to manage, amongst others, financial sustainability challenge, improved income recovery, illegal settlements and economic and community development and growth.

To succeed we must extend our abilities to work as a collective and remove all manifestations of silo forming. At this stage we need a corporate structure that are aligned with the changed environment.

We subsequently engaged in an organisational restructuring exercise and once we concluded the necessary steps we will table the restructuring plan and revised organogram to council for its consideration and approval.

Public apathy towards the water restriction measures, adopted and implemented by council throughout Theewaterskloof, concerns me. The current water saving is 5% and far from the 20% required by the national minister of water and sanitation.

A perception exists that most of Theewaterskloof is not water scarce areas and that dam and other water resource levels are high. This is not the case and, in certain towns, water levels are critically low whilst some sources is about to dry up.

Subsequently we must support the national drive to restrict water usage and to save water. If we do not adhere to this and improve substantially on the 5% we will have to consider the implementation of level 3 water restrictions.

I appointed a task team under the chairpersonship of Councillor Kallie Papier to lead and monitor our water restriction initiative. The task team will keep the mayor and council informed about looming crises and the way to deal with it.

Fires that plagued the Western Cape earlier this summer also affected Theewaterskloof. A number of fires started in Grabouw and spread to the Helderberg. Rumours of looting must be treated with caution but when it is proofed it must be dealt with decisively.

Fighting fires is very expensive and threatens available water resources which is utilised to put it out. The situation cannot be allowed to continue. We must do everything in our ability to inform communities of the devastating effect that fires have on people and the environment.

I thank all those who slaved day and night to put the fires out in dangerous circumstances.

We again advertised the position of the Municipal Manager and interviews will be arranged. I trust that we will soon be able to appoint a new municipal manager. I thank Mister Davy Louw who is currently acting as municipal manager.

The media and owners of stray animals are heavily criticising the municipality for impounding these animals in terms of a by-law. We are also criticised for selling these animals when we receive a court order to do so. We are legally obliged to honour by-laws. Stray animals poses serious threats to the public and must be impounded. If owners fail to pay fees and penalties we must sell the animals to recover pound costs.

The affected small scale farmers are accusing the municipality of damaging their farming practises when their animals are impounded. It is important to understand that the municipality is only impounding animals that are illegally on private land, municipal land and on roads.

The farmers expect from us to make commonages available for agricultural purposes. The reality is that we do not have such land. Furthermore land reform and new farmer development are not municipal mandates but competencies of the national department of rural development and land reform; as well as the national and provincial departments of agriculture.

We will deal with the issues of emerging farmers strategically and we will play an active role in ensuring that the national and provincial governments and organs of state exercise their responsibilities regarding emerging farmers.

At the Herberg and the IDP workshops we identified illegal land grabs as a key risk for the municipality; as well as existing communities who have, for decades, been waiting for relieve patiently. I appeal to all colleagues to acknowledge the complexity and seriousness of this matter. Our communities expect from us to deal with this risk and to contain the uncontrolled expansion of our overcrowded informal settlements.

I appeal to my colleagues from all political parties to support me with this and not to politicize the matter. We're dealing with communities who are faced by desperate conditions and our key responsibility is towards them. I am concerned about the slow progress in finding a solution for the illegal land grab on the land of Public Works in Grabouw.

Several meetings were held between Public Works, Human Settlements (Western Cape) and TWK with representatives of the Siyayanzela Informal Settlement. Containment measures and logistics regarding a survey in the settlement were discussed.

Agreements reached had not been implemented by the Department of Public Works. I will raise the lack of progress with the Minister of Human Settlements and might request an urgent meeting with the National Minister of Public Works and or his DG about my concerns.

The Municipality recently abolished illegal structures under construction in Genadendal. Similar action may have to be considered in the case of Riemvasmaak and Villiersdorp.

I have also called for the urgent finalisation in establishing the Land Invasion Unit approved many months ago.

I thank you.

Christelle Vosloo  
Executive Mayor