**Statement by Good MP Brett Herron**

**28 February**

**DA MUST GET RID OF DIRTY GEORGE COUNCILLOR IMPLICATED IN R350 MILLION SCANDAL**

The DA must stop pussy-footing around corruption in its ranks and dump its senior George Councillor DL Cronje.

The Public Protector today released the outcomes of its investigation into the transfer of R350m of the town’s funds to Old Mutual, while Cronje was in charge of the town’s finances. Cronje’s son, DL Cronje Jnr, received sizeable commission from the deal.

The matter was brought to the Public Protector’s attention by GOOD Leader Patricia de Lille in 2019.

Because Cronje’s conduct was subsequently considered by the NPA, which declined to prosecute, and by the Council, which slapped him on the wrist, imposing a fine of one month’s salary, the Public Protector restricted its remedial action to the municipality.

The report is nonetheless a damning indictment of Cronje’s and the governing DA’s integrity.

The Public Protector found the investment “irregular”, and in violation of the Municipal Finance Management Act, Municipal Investment Regulations and the Cash and Investment Policy of the Municipality.

The municipality’s investment constituted improper conduct as envisaged in the Constitution, and maladministration in terms of the Public Protector Act. The conduct of the officials and councillor involved were also not in accordance with the standard of ethics and diligence contemplated in section 195 of the Constitution, the Public Protector found.

To remedy *“this maladministration and improper conduct”*, the PP ordered the municipality to re-evaluate and re-capacitate its investment policies, procedures and financial controls.

The Executive Mayor was ordered take the appropriate steps to ensure that the Audit Committee of the Municipality was properly constituted as contemplated by section 166 of the MFMA with members that are competent and that they have the necessary skills, qualifications and experience to perform their statutory responsibilities.”

The DA purports to have a zero-tolerance approach to corruption wherever it governs and must act accordingly and get rid of Councillor Cronje.

Slapping Cronje on the wrist is not zero-tolerance; it would be more accurately described as aiding and abetting, and covering up for its cadres.

Cronje is not fit to serve the people of George. He is dirty and must be discarded.