

## **MAYORAL ADDRESS ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING 31 JANUARY 2019**

SPEAKER  
DEPUTY MAYOR  
ALL ALDERMEN  
ALL COUNCILLORS  
MUNICIPAL MANAGER  
DIRECTORS & SENIOR STAFF MEMBERS  
PUBLIC IN GALLERY  
MEDIA

Allow me to officially welcome you back after the festive period recess, and wish each one a blessed and prosperous year ahead. As we embark on this new year I hope you are geared up and ready to take on sobering and exciting challenges, this is an election year which promises lots of excitement.

I also want to take this opportunity to congratulate the successful 2018 matric class and wish them well for those who will further their studies at tertiary institutions, and to all our learners in all our schools good luck for the academic year that lies ahead.

Heartfelt thanks to those officials who worked over the festive period that have ensured a successful festive season program that has by enlarge been without major incidents. Special word of thanks to all traffic personnel, fire department, law enforcement, anti - land invasion unit, cleansing department that were visible at all major points and major beaches, keeping the vigilance on our roads and picking up litter throughout the festive season.

Sadly, I need to convey my condolences to those who lost their lives at beaches and on roads in our city. Speaker we are cognizant that 2019 is going to be a challenging year given the mandate of our communities and many tasks we must tackle this election year. This we know will be an exceptionally busy year for councillors and officials of this municipality. However, I would like to reassure the residents of George that service delivery and our core business will continue unabated.

Regardless of 2019 being an election year we will strive to raise the bar on service delivery. For the past two weeks I had one -on-one sessions with the various directorates and my request was that the focus of our activities must be on improving and expediting service delivery to the community of George and constantly improving the efficiency and quality of service delivery.

For example, although we are trying our best to keep our neighbourhoods clean we are challenged with illegal dumping in especially most of our previously disadvantaged areas.

### **Civil Engineering Services**

Spending on Capital projects in the Civil Engineering Department at the end of December stood at 17.4% (or R58.1m) and well under the planned R121m from a budgeted total of R332m.

During the upcoming Adjustments Budget in February 2019. approximately R72m will be taken from the CES's Capital budget that is being used for the current housing projects at Erf 325 and not administered by CES.

This will calculate the real spending at CES to 22.3% which is still not satisfactory. The underspending can be mostly contributed to the lower than expected spending on the Outeniqua Water Treatment Works' Civils project and the pending Mechanical Engineering tender that is ready to be advertised.

The roads upgrading project where finality on the Vuk'upile is still pending should be resolved by 8 February as reported during the ECDP Steercom of 29 Jan 2019.

The Bid Adjudication Committee, during their sitting in December 2018 concluded the appointment of a Contractor for the Garden Route Dam and the appointment letter of the successful tenderer is pending.

It was previously reported that the Contractor on the NMB project was served with a notice of termination and after no response, the Contract was terminated in accordance with the General Conditions of Contract. It can also be confirmed that the latter action shouldn't have an impact on the roll-out of Phase 4 of the GIPTN and that the envisaged remedial work will only commence after settling of the bus service, once it is rolled out.

The operational activities of the department is progressing well, with the exception of the few recurring challenges, such as overtime and staff shortages, that will only be resolved over time.

### Community Services

Blue & Green bag tender has been awarded and the service provider will start on the 1 February. Citizens will now be able to put garden refuse in bags to be removed.

Blou/ Groen sak tender is toegeken. Begin op 1 Februarie. Inwoners kan nou ook tuinafval in sakke sit om te verwyder sowel as herwinbare artikels.

I'm glad to mention that construction work at the transfer station in Uniondale will commence soon.

Bouwerk by die oorlaaistase in Uniondale sal eersdaags in aanvang neem.

As stated earlier illegal dumping remains a huge challenge for the department, taking into account insufficient funding and staff.

Onwettige stortings bly 'n reuse uitdaging mbt 'n tekort aan fondse en mannekrag om alles te verwyder.

The department engage in collaboration with the Garden Route District municipality to launch a home composting project during next week.

Die loodsing van die "home composting" vind volgende week plaas in samewerking met die Distriksraad.

### **Successes:**

Library Week: will be celebrated during 18 – 24 March 2018 with the theme **Collaborate at Your Library**

10<sup>th</sup> Funda Mzantsi Reading Championship: 29 Sept – 4<sup>th</sup> October 2019

### **Challenges:**

Vandalism of libraries / Library Security

Budget cuts – the Provincial book budget has been cut severely. Libraries only get 10% of the books that they've received in previous years – this impacts on our library use and circulation figures, which will drop severely

Online resources i.e. Britannica Online – a powerful information and resource tool – has been stopped due to budget cuts

### Fire Department

Successes:

All of us is aware of the successful firefighting operations we had during October and November 2018, for these efforts it has been decided to acknowledge the unselfish efforts by firefighters in honorary celebration on 13 February 2019

Staff and Officer shortage is very big challenge in the fire department. Training, both formal and in-service training, remain a challenge and solutions is being investigated to address the issue.

Continuous efforts are being made in getting Land owners, both state and private, to enter discussions to address high fire danger areas and invasive alien plant eradication.

### Corporate Services

This department has progressed well with their capital projects,

Upgrades was made to improve the standard of our facilities and to enhance service delivery

- Painting of the outside walls of the George civic center.
- Upgrading of kitchens at the Parkdene and Lawaai kamp community hall.
- Repairing of the Rosemoor community hall ceiling.
- Curtains and blinds installed at the Touwsrante and Lawaai kamp community halls.

### Securing the Main Building

- The installation of an access control main entrance, Main building George Municipality.

I need to inform councillors that corporate service will take the lead to change the working culture of the organisation, this will start with to move to an electronic solution system they will embark on.

Council Training will take place during April & May on the usage of electronic agendas. By June 2019 we want to go paperless on agendas.

### FINANCE

The 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of each financial year is a very busy period for the finance directorate in particular, as the

- Preparation and delivery of the Mid-year report.
- The preparation of the adjustment budget for the financial year is currently in process
- the next draft MTREF IDP, budget and budget related policies will be tabled by end of March.
- Addressing the challenges raised during the 2017/18 audit.

I have further also decided that we will establish a technical budget committee to help guide the budget process to ensure that we budget well in order to eventually obtain the strategic goals of this council.

We need to refocus our collective efforts.

The biggest challenge at the income section in finance is the collection of outstanding debt. High unemployment and unfriendly economic environment can be regarded as contributing factors to high outstanding debt. It can be reported that the credit control section is using all available resources to collect outstanding debt.

Die grootste uitdaging by die Inkomste afdeling, is die invordering van uitstaande skulde. Die huidige skuld posisie is as gevolg van die hoë werkloosheid en die swak ekonomiese klimaat waar binne die land hantse bevind. Die Krediet beheer afdeling benut al die beskikbare bronne en beleid optimaal om alle uitstaande skulde te vorder.

I can report that the roll-out of the GIPTN smart card electronic ticketing system is doing well. Further marketing initiatives will benefit the sales of the tickets, thus reducing the boarding time of our commuters.

## **Human Settlements**

### **CHALLENGES & SUCCESSES**

#### **SUCCESSES**

The Section: **Existing Housing** is proud of the following successes:

- GPS Pilot Project

Another successful GPS Pilot Project, initiated by Provincial Government, was completed on 29 January 2019. The overall objective of this pilot project was to perform informal settlement surveys which would assist in better understanding of the household living conditions in informal settlements, social profiling of families and to trace applicants living in informal settlements using GPS coordinates which will ensure that housing allocations are done in a fairer manner.

#### **ADVANTAGES OF THE PROJECT**

- The Land Management Section, which is in control of all the informal areas, could effectively use this data to update their records.
- Socio – economic data of people living in the informal settlements could successfully be recorded.
- The GM project team have learnt a great deal through administering this project.
- FLISP Awareness

FLISP Awareness sessions were also held in 2018 in various communities. On Saturday, 23 February 2019 a Provincial Open day will be held where all relevant stakeholders will present their services to the community.

- Electronic Waiting List System

Our electronic waiting list system is updated regularly and various lists can be retrieved from it. It is reported that beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries are satisfied with the waiting list cards that are received as proof that they are registered on the system.

## **CHALLENGES**

Staff shortage remains the main challenge for this section as all functions cannot be attended to as the department would like to respond.

## **SECTION: NEW HOUSING**

### **SUCSESSES:**

#### **PROTEA PARK**

The Section: New Housing won the Provincial Award for the best EPHP Housing project

#### **THEMBALETHU INFORMAL SETTLEMENT (ALLBRICK)**

+/- 2700 inhabitants from this settlement was provided with chemical toilets as an interim measure and the Provincial Department of Human Settlements has appointed a professional team to plan the formalisation of the area.

#### **VARIOUS HOUSING PROJECTS**

The Metro Grounds, Wilderness Heights, Military Veterans, Golden Valley, Erf 325 East (PHASE 1 AND 2), Ext 42 & 58 and the Thembaletu UISP projects are all in implementation phases.

#### **HOUSES HANDED OVER**

Thembaletu UISP: 190 houses was handed over to beneficiaries

Extension 42 & 58 : 94 houses handed over to beneficiaries

#### **CHALLENGES**

Staff shortages is the main challenge as well as skills transfer and training within the Section. On-going protest action which has a negative effect on service delivery.

## **Electrotechnical Service Department**

### **Successes**

The Electricity Department is in the process of being audited by NERSA. Their final audit report will be submitted to Council once received. In their preliminary report they state amongst other things: "The Licensee is commended for the in-house projects of installing a SCADA system."

The Municipality can indeed be very proud of staff (in this case the Engineering Sub-Directorate) and accomplishments like this.

### **Challenges**

Illegal connections and the resultant loss of assets remain one of the bigger challenges for the Directorate. People going off the grid is posing a huge income loss as we already lose about 3% in come. New ideas of combatting this crime is continuously explored.

### **Goals**

The Directorate has quite a few goals for 2019, of which a significant improvement in the turn-around time of attending to streetlight complaints, feature highest. Two pilot projects will also be introduced, using the Workforce App, to track complaints from receipt to completion.

Councillors listening to all the challenges we are facing I wish to call on all of you irrespective of your political affiliation to do your utmost best to serve the people of George.

In conclusion, speaker I've said it earlier 2019 will be a challenging year for all involved with the council but I will once again like to reassure everyone that we will continue to strive to be more efficient and continue to work hard in 2019, this is in total commitment to improve the lives of all the people of George.

Thank you