



Grahamstown Residents' Association

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9th November 2016

Makana Municipality

City Hall, High Street,

Grahamstown, 6139

Dear Mr Planga

I am writing to you on behalf of Grahamstown Residents' Association concerning matters raised at the Full Council meeting on 2nd November 2016. At this, and numerous other Council meetings over the past 12 months Councillors have repeatedly and explicitly stated that there are two major problems;

- that a high proportion of Municipal employees are not working as they should during their normal contracted working hours; and
- that overtime is excessive and must be tightly controlled and reduced. Councillors have appealed to Directors and Managers to resolve these glaring problems of poor management and unsatisfactory supervision.

Despite these demands from Councillors, neither of these problems has been resolved at all satisfactorily. On 24th June 2016, in view of excessive overtime claims, Council resolved that, apart from statutory overtime, shift allowances and standby allowances, no overtime should be paid unless it was pre-approved at Director level.

We fully understand that organised labour and trades unions will need to be engaged, and that there may be adverse reactions from sections of the workforce. On the other hand, the situation is already so dire that there is little to lose from confronting these problems head on.

The citizenry across Grahamstown cannot afford to let Makana Municipality fall further as all our services are suffering, and it's bad for business and hence jobs in Grahamstown. We are also in danger of defaulting on the payment plan to Eskom which could lead to power cuts. From recent statements it is clear that The Executive Mayor, Councillor Matyumza and Councillor Nhanha are united in condemning the current situation Makana finds itself in.

We believe that there are management decisions that could be implemented quickly that would greatly assist Municipal performance and also reduce expenditure. We ask you as the Chief Executive of the municipality to tell us what is being done to ensure that workers are obliged to work their contracted hours and overtime is cut to a small fraction of the current levels.

Makana Municipality has been headed towards financial insolvency for some years, whereby it regularly runs out of cash to pay for basic materials, can't pay creditors and service delivery is compromised and interrupted. The period of s139 Administration from September 2014 to June 2016 has not resolved the underlying problems.

It is in everyone's interests to have a financially sound local municipality that is capacitated and well managed. We encourage greater transparency and openness so that the public and stakeholders can assist in supporting and promoting the well-being of Grahamstown.

We request that you respond to this letter by Wednesday 16th November 2016. Thereafter, we propose to hold a public meeting to discuss the way forward concerning the matters raised above as we wish to avert further crisis. We will be inviting you to address the meeting because of your key role in resolving this crisis. GRA wants to work productively with Makana Municipality for the benefit of the wider Grahamstown community.

Yours sincerely

Tim Bull

Tim Bull (Secretary to Grahamstown Residents' Association) timothybull05@aol.com