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REPORT TO SUBCOUNCIL 20

R White
021 444 8112
14 May 2019

1. **ITEM NUMBER:** 20SUB37/05/19

2. **SUBJECT:**

REQUEST FOR CLOSURE OF CANAL: WATER STREET, CLAREMONT

3. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Ward Councillor, Councillor Sharon Cottle was alerted in 2018 to the issue at Water Street, Claremont whereby local resident(s) were complaining of vagrants using the canal for various means, such as sleeping and utilising the space as a public toilet. Complaints of litter as well as person's allegedly illegally utilising the water from the canal for the cleaning of cars was also received.

Various emails were sent between Councillor Cottle's office and the Subcouncil to the affected line departments to resolve the matter. A number of official onsite meetings as well as ad hoc inspections were also held over a few months towards the end of 2018 as well as for the first few months of 2019.

Various departments implemented a number of measures to assist and try and alleviate the matter including adding 2 low flow weirs in the canal, adding razor wire and plants to prevent persons from settling or sleeping in certain areas. Solid Waste installed signage to warn against illegal dumping. In addition, Solid Waste's cleansing unit have made concerted efforts to make sure that their green bins in the area emptied frequently to prevent excess litter ending up in the road reserve and in the canal.

In January 2019, Councillor Cottle submitted a Motion to Subcouncil 20 requesting the Transport Directorate to investigate the feasibility of installing a fence from St Leger Road to Heatherton Street in Claremont in the hope of resolving the matter once and for all.

4. RECOMMENDATION

The report is for information.


5. ANNEXURES:

Annexure A – Motion submitted by Councillor Cottle in January 2019

Annexure B – Formal Response from Catchment Stormwater and River Management regarding the request for the canal to be closed / fenced off

Annexure C – Email Correspondence including a Matrix Action Plan as well as images of positive steps by Catchment Stormwater and River Management and the Transport Directorate taken to alleviate the issue

FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT :

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| NAME | <i>Richard White</i> |
| CONTACT NUMBERS | 021 444 8112 |
| E-MAIL ADDRESS | Richard.White@capetown.gov.za |
| SIGNATURE |  14 May 2019. |
| DIRECTORATE | Urban Management: South (Subcouncils) |
| FILE REF NO | |

Black River - Water street canal – 23 January 2019**Background**

The Black River canal runs through a section of ward 58, all along water street. The section in question is the stretch from St Leger Road to Heatherton Street, Claremont.

Problem

The water source from this canal is the main attraction to this part of the ward. People are found using this area as an ablution block, washing laundry and collecting water in wheelie bins to wash taxis, way on the other side of Palyra Road.

These activities had resulted in litter, faeces and unhygienic smells and a fly infestation, leaving the area in an unsightly state. Residents are feeling unsafe and not comfortable to assist in addressing the current issues in this area.

I am inundated with emails from residents on a daily basis, with evidence of the state of the canal.

Interim solutions

- LE has come on board and added this area to their daily hotspot list. Timing is key and so they are not always successful in finding anyone there when they patrol the area.
- We constantly log calls with solid waste to clean up the area. They have responded every time but this is not sustainable as the frequency of litter and faeces appear on a daily basis.
- I have met with officials over a period of 18 months now and have in recent months included Cllr Ian Iversen, representing the subcouncil, to try and escalate the matter. Attempts to find a permanent solution has not materialized to date, mostly claiming due to budget constraints.
- A suggestion was made to plant spikey shrubs on the embankment but the patch that already exists has just become cluttered with litter and making it even more difficult for the solid waste department to clean in between and around it. This may not be a viable option and will not ensure a deterrent to the current access to the water in the canal.

Proposed permanent solutions

I would therefore, as the ward councillor for ward 58, propose that this stretch of the canal, between St Leger Road and Heatherton Street be fenced off with a gate. The gate will give the Roads department and storm water staff access to the said area.

I would further request the support from my colleagues at subcouncil 20 to have this item placed on the MRA list so we could request for funding to be made available for this solution proposed solution to be implemented as soon as possible.

From: Abdulla Parker <Abdulla.Parker@capetown.gov.za>
Sent: Thursday, March 28, 2019 9:12 AM
To: Richard White <Richard.White@capetown.gov.za>; Brendon Fortuin <Brendon.Fortuin@capetown.gov.za>; Talcott Persent <Talcott.Persent@capetown.gov.za>
Cc: Brigitte Francis <Brigitte.Francis@capetown.gov.za>; Jody Timothy Okkers <JodyTimothy.Okkers@capetown.gov.za>; Justin Smit <Justin.Smit@capetown.gov.za>; Motlatsi Christian Nkhoesa <MotlatsiChristian.Nkhoesa@capetown.gov.za>; Conrad Frehse <Conrad.Frehse@capetown.gov.za>
Subject: RE: Ongoing issues - Water Street - request for a fence

Dear Richard – I trust you are well

Your email of 22 March 2019 has reference. Kindly note that Brendon Fortuin and I have consulted extensively with our support colleagues and our response is as follows:

1. In general, we do not support fencing of water courses, as we have found that the fence is installed, just to be vandalized,
2. The merits of each application for fencing is considered, and the request for a fence by Cllr Sharon Cottle is **not supported**, as it will not solve the problem of vandalism, but merely shift the problem upstream or downstream,
3. Please also find attached our two responses to Cllr Cottle, dated 20 May 2018 – where it is evident that Brendon Fortuin Asset Management and Maintenance Branch and my Stormwater Branch have gone well beyond our mandate to assist with reducing the impact of vagrancy.

Regards

Abdulla Parker

Catchment Stormwater and River Management – Water and Sanitation

Tel: 021 400 1385 | **Cell:** 082 6068128

From: Abdulla Parker <Abdulla.Parker@capetown.gov.za>

Sent: Tuesday, 20 November 2018 14:13

To: Sharon Cottle <Sharon.Cottle@capetown.gov.za>

Cc: Leandre Layman <LeandreElizabeth.Layman@capetown.gov.za>; Brendon Fortuin <Brendon.Fortuin@capetown.gov.za>; Justin Smit <Justin.Smit@capetown.gov.za>; Talcott Persent <Talcott.Persent@capetown.gov.za>; Motlatsi Christian Nkhoesa <MotlatsiChristian.Nkhoesa@capetown.gov.za>; Richard Bosman <RichardGavin.Bosman@capetown.gov.za>; Rudolf Wiltshire <Rudolf.Wiltshire@capetown.gov.za>; Conrad Frehse <Conrad.Frehse@capetown.gov.za>; Lurann Bruiners <LurannJaydene.Bruiners@capetown.gov.za>; Kyle Keefer <kyle@mfm.co.za>

Subject: RE: Action Plan Matrix for Cllr Cottle_Claremont area_vicinity of Water and Ledger Streets

Dear Cllr Cottle

Brendon and I are responsible for the "Roads and Stormwater" component, and this is correctly reflected in the action plan matrix. It is clear from the matrix that:

1. "Roads and Stormwater has already come to the table by installing 2 low flow weirs,
2. That Roads and Stormwater is already looking for agreed to solutions (as discussed this morning), i.e. cactus and stones and razor wire. These interventions is well beyond our usual mandate, and we unfortunately cannot do more than this bearing in mind our limited resources (financial and human),
3. Kindly engage with Rudolf Wiltshire, Richard Bosman etc, Health, and the community with the objective of seeking solution w.r.t. the other challenges, as highlighted in the APM
4. Lastly, we have tested the Action Plan Matrix with many other communities and the APM was well appreciated,
5. Under the circumstances mentioned above, no report is necessary,

You will note that the challenge of access to water is allocated to your name. In this regard, as indicated, pls engage with Messrs Rudolf Wiltshire and Richard Bosman to discuss the challenges of people accessing the canal for purposes.

Regards

Abdulla Parker

Catchment Stormwater and River Management – Water and Sanitation

Tel: 021 400 1385 | **Cell:** 082 6068128

ACTION PLAN MATRIX FOR CLLR SHARON COTTLE - CHALLENGES OF VAGRANTS AND OTHER USERS ON THE WELL BEING OF RESIDENTS IN THE CLAREMONT AREA

| CHALLENGE | WHAT IS HAPPENING | IDEAS TO SOLVE THE CHALLENGES | DEPARTMENTS | PROJECT MANAGER / PERSON DRIVING |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| A) General vagrancy, taxi drivers etc. B) Beggars C) Loitering | 1. Vagrants and taxi drivers using the concrete slab at the end of the canal and canal embankment for urinating and defecating. 2. Vagrants washing in canal and hanging clothes on bridge fence - public nuisance. 3. People abstracting water out of the canal. | 1. Collaborative approach with Social Services, Law Enforcement, Metro Police and SAPS to systematically remove vagrants from area and re-integrate these people into society. Current situation to be managed better. 2. Local community to engage and explore ideas to manage the area better. (neighbourhood watch, local security and SAPS). Clir Cottle to explore integration of security, in order to implement 24/7 enforcement. 3. Roads and Stormwater to pursue the following recommendations: a) Planting of additional cactus vegetation along the embankment b) Covering concrete slab with razor wire or sharp stones (bedded in cement). Note: Roads and Stormwater has already constructed a low flow weir | 1. "Roads and Stormwater" 2. Human Settlements (Anti-Land Invasion) 3. Law Enforcement and Security 4. Metro Police (By-Law Enforcement) 5. SAPS (local CPF representative) 6. Social and Early Childhood Development 7. Health 8. Community members | Clir Cottle, "Roads and Stormwater" |
| B) Health challenges as a result of vagrants and loitering | 1. The bathing, urinating and defecating on the concrete slab and along the canal bank. | 1. Sanitation services are not available and they can't be made available at the canal. 2. Re-integrating vagrants with families and assistance to find formal employment. 3. Explore possibility of a portable toilet to be erected close to the canal | 1. Social and Early Childhood Development 2. Community members | Clir Cottle to co-ordinate with Health and Law Enforcement |
| C) Waste management | 1. Scratching of bins by vagrants resulting in garbage thrown out of the bin and this is also a security issue. 2. Solid waste landing into the stormwater system (dumped, wind blown or when by rain) causes blockages and localised flooding 3. Disposing of liquid waste into stormwater system. | 1. Presence of law enforcement agencies will prevent vagrants from throwing rubbish out of bins. | 1. Area Cleaning 2. Solid Waste Collections 3. Health 4. Community members | Clir Cottle to engage with Solid Waste and Law Enforcement |

