

CITY OF CAPE TOWN

SPEECH BY ALDERMAN DAN PLATO: COUNCIL MEETING OF 26 AUGUST 2010

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Mr Speaker, Councillors, City Manager, officials, members of the media, ladies and gentlemen.

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the loss of Councillor Thomas Klein. He was a well loved and respected pastor, evangelist and servant of the broader Ravensmead area for many years, whether it be helping the Ravensmead Clinic and other health facilities, preaching with and mobilising the churches from Ravensmead and even up the West Coast, working with Ravensmead SAPS as the CPF Chair for many years, and with schools where he worked in raising awareness on drugs, abuse and sexual violence. He will sorely be missed by his fellow Councillors, City officials and the community he served.

Speaker, I would like to express our deepest sympathies to the families and communities who lost their children in the tragic taxi and train collision yesterday. I am outraged that, despite a system being in place which has worked successfully for many years, and complied with all statutory requirements, it was nevertheless circumvented. Such a loss is difficult to comprehend and the City's Traffic Services and Metro Police will continue to apprehend and prosecute those who do not comply with road safety measures.

Speaker, there is currently a great deal of public debate around the much criticised Protection of Information Bill. I would like to reassure all members of the media present here and elsewhere, that we are with you. The multiparty government wholeheartedly supports freedom of the press. Without it, we would never be able to achieve our goal of an open and transparent administration. The media play a massive role in ensuring that channels of communication between The City and the public remain open and free from political interference.

The City has not been seriously affected by the nationwide public servants' strike. Our Metro Police have been monitoring the situation closely. Officers have kept an eye on areas such as Nyanga, Khayelitsha, Athlone and major routes along the N1 and N2, as well as the Tygerberg and Groote Schuur hospitals. Officers also monitored activities following a public servants' strike meeting this week. They reported no incidents. Officers from all the City's

law enforcement services will be deployed today to monitor a planned march from Keizergracht to Parliament Street.

Speaker, at the last Council meeting the multiparty government was called racist by the ANC members.

The ANC also claim once again that nothing is happening in the informal settlements and predominately black areas.

The word racist was bandied about more than once by the ANC members. It seems as if racism will be the theme to get at us during the run-up to the upcoming local government election. I promise to rather focus on what the ANC calls the "lack of development" in informal settlements and township areas.

While we get hammered by the ANC in this Council, the National Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs is of the opinion that the City of Cape Town is doing a good job and, furthermore, that we are the leading Metro in the entire country.

The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, the Business Trust and the University of Stellenbosch jointly conducted research to define service delivery levels of all the districts and metropolitan municipalities across South Africa. The findings have been published in the Universal Household Access to Basic Services Index. For the provision of water to its residents, the City of Cape Town received a rating of 100 percent. For sanitation we received a 94 percent rating. For electricity provision the City received a rating of 98 percent. All in all the City of Cape Town received a universal access rating of 91 percent.

Compare this to the City of Johannesburg which received a universal access rating of 86 percent, Tshwane Municipality received only 66 percent, Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality received a 78 percent rating and Nelson Mandela Metro received 84 percent. It is therefore clear from this index that the City of Cape Town is doing something right even for those living in informal settlement areas. We far outweigh the rest of the country. We are doing our best and will strive to do even better.

Speaker, over the last four financial years, billions of Rands have been spent and will be spent in Khayelitsha alone. Details of some of the major Urban Renewal Projects in Khayelitsha are:

- The development cost for the first phase of the Khayelitsha CBD development is R451.6million.
- The South African Rail Commuter Corporation in partnership with the City of Cape Town extended the Khayelitsha railway line at a cost of R430million - R115 million of which was paid for by the City.

- The new Town Two Clinic is under construction for R20 million.
- The Kuyasa Node Development and the Site C Area Development will be funded from the R310million, NDPG (Neighbourhood Partnership Development Grant) allocations for Khayelitsha.
- The Urban Design Framework Plan for Site C and TR Section has been completed
- The Khayelitsha District Hospital that is currently under construction represents a R500 million investment

Speaker, further developments with the VPUU projects have also taken place:

- The Love Life Youth Centre is now an integrated project incorporating the upgrading of the Masibambane Hall to a Youth Centre. The redevelopment of the adjacent Environmental Health Centre is currently underway and the budget is R12,4 million
- The Multi-purpose Library and ECD centre currently under construction, is due for completion within the next two months and the current budget is R20 million
- A number of sports facilities have been constructed, including: the FIFA Football for Hope Centre: budget R5 million, the Harare Urban Park: budget R10 million, the Kwamfundo School sports facilities: budget R9,5 million
- The business hub project which is anchored by a bulk buying/warehousing facility for local retail and spaza shops has been awarded to Tempani Construction and implementation has commenced. The current budget is R20 million
- Three neighbourhood community centres have been constructed in formal areas to date with a total investment of R9 million. An informal centre, utilising containers, has been constructed in Site C as the temporary head office for upgrading in the area. This will be replaced with formal facilities as development progresses and the containers will be re-used in other areas and the investment here is R1 million. As part of the Informal Settlement Upgrading Pilot programme, the City will develop a number of neighbourhood centres in appropriate locations.

Speaker, an update on the housing projects that have reached completion or are currently under construction, is as follows:

Project Name	Units	Budget spend to date	Completed to Date
Kuyasa Town 3	2400 units	R192 million	1338
Nonqubela Phase 2	1000 units	R100 million	797

Silvertown	1316 units	R132 million	1401
Site C	6265 units	R231 million	4100
PHP	1668 units	R125 million	1668
TOTAL	12649 units	R810 million	9304

The formalisation of the interim services to full township standards in the Zwelitsha area in Enkanini was successfully completed in May this year. A total of 1 526 serviced sites were created. They were handed over to the beneficiaries, who were originally relocated to Zwelitsha to clear the way for the Khayelitsha Rail Extension Project.

Some proposed housing projects are:

- Green Point Phase 3- Preparing to appoint consultants for pre-planning studies
- Nonqubela Makhaza-Service sites completed and housing proposed in future
- Nonqubela Phase 1 Site B -Service sites completed and housing proposed in future
- Nonqubela Phase 2 Site B-Service sites completed and housing proposed in future
- Silvertown -Service sites completed and housing proposed in future
- Mitchells Plain Phase 1 Projects currently underway 1436 of 1838 houses handed over to date
- Eastridge Housing Development – 621 Units Proposed in future

The recent attempt to illegally invade houses in Mitchells Plain is disturbing. With so many new housing projects close to completion, these are attempts to circumvent the housing waiting list. Of particular concern is the Tafelsig Housing Project and we are conducting a forensic investigation to ascertain what the problems are and to resolve them.

Speaker, a number of informal areas in Khayelitsha are situated in flood-prone areas. The City's Housing Directorate has therefore identified a number of possible relocation sites within the greater Khayelitsha area as well as other parts of the city.

Following consultation, it is quite evident that the existing residents and communities resist the influx of newcomers in their area. It is therefore clear that the relocation of people currently living in flood-prone areas will be problematic.

I have accordingly asked the Khayelitsha Development Forum to assist in the negotiations with the affected communities so that we can reach an amicable agreement. I thank them for their willingness to assist in this regard.

Speaker, funding allocations by the Department of Energy indicate that, for the moment, only proclaimed areas will receive Integrated National Electrification Programme funding. This decision means that about 10,000 electricity connections in informal settlements in Khayelitsha, that the City authorised Eskom to complete and which created much anticipation in this community, will now not occur. Furthermore, this work is unlikely to be financed from Department of Energy "top-up" funds.

The only solution will be to proclaim these informal settlements or to use City money to fund electrification in Eskom areas. This allocation decision by the Department of Energy will significantly inhibit service delivery in the areas under the jurisdiction of this municipality. I have accordingly written to the national minister requesting an urgent meeting to discuss this serious problem.

Speaker, the City received a landmark judgement in the Cape High Court on 20 August, Maccsands had begun mining on City-owned land, but without approval in terms of land use or environmental legislation. The court confirmed the City and Provincial Government view that a mining permit from the Department of Mineral Resources did not give Maccsands the right to ignore land use and environmental legislation.

Municipal planning is defined and protected in the Constitution as a local authorities function. The City is not opposed to mining, but we have a responsibility to our residents to ensure that mining is planned in an appropriate way.

Speaker, the issue of baboon management is one which has captured the attention of many, including the media, for several years and we are at an important stage in our deliberations in seeking a long-term and sustainable solution to this challenge. But before returning to this, I would like to reflect on a broader concept which I believe must first be understood and embraced by us as City leaders.

I refer to the critical issue of achieving a balance in Cape Town between providing important urban development for an ever-increasing population and protecting the natural resources, including our biodiversity and scenic beauty, which are so important, not just for our own recreation, but also for the city's economy in the long term.

Last week I attended the launch of an outstanding publication called “Growing Together: Thinking and Practice of Urban Nature Corridors” which reflects the work of that admirable organisation, Cape Flats Nature. The launch was held at Driftsands Nature Reserve, in the heart of an area where poverty and under-employment are pervasive.

What was notable was the presence at the launch of many people from the Cape Flats and the passion they expressed about protecting green lungs and corridors, such as Driftsands, Macassar Dunes, Wolfgat and also baboons!

Living in close proximity to wild areas is undoubtedly a privilege, but also a challenge, and it is important that we respond to those challenges with energy and the conviction that the future of our city – and its legacy to our grandchildren – is at stake. Baboons – and their habitat - represent an iconic part of our biodiversity heritage. To maintain a healthy population of chacma baboons in the Cape Peninsula on a long-term, sustainable basis is important.

We also recognise the importance of protecting our citizens from the increasingly daring and threatening behavior of baboons that invade homes in search of food. While it is often residents and visitors who are themselves to blame for inadequate disposal of food and waste, which encourages baboons to raid, we also need to ensure that people and property are protected. And here we have found that placing a team of motivated baboon monitors in the worst-affected areas to limit baboon/people interaction, is by far the most effective way of controlling the situation. The creation of 60 to 70 jobs also manifests an important social benefit of this programme which the City has funded in recent years.

Unfortunately I have to say that our attempts over many months and years to persuade our partners SA National Parks, Provincial Government and CapeNature to join us in funding this much-needed programme have resulted in failure. In spite of our firm belief, supported by strong legal opinion, that the City, the Province and SANParks are jointly responsible for the management of baboons in the Cape Peninsula – and the funding which follows – our partners have refused to provide long-term funding for baboon monitors.

We believe, quite simply, that a percentage of income received at the gates of Cape of Good Hope, Boulders and Silvermine should be contributed to assist in managing the animals which cross park boundaries to the detriment of residents and ultimately themselves.

As a result of this stance, we are left with no other option but to seek legal redress. We have invited our colleagues at SANParks and Provincial Government (which includes CapeNature) to join us in seeking a declaratory order from court to assign, once and for all, mandates indicating the area of responsibility, including funding, for baboon management. They have refused to do so, leaving us little option but to go it alone and seek a court ruling. And in the interim, we have made available the necessary funding to ensure the delivery of a programme of baboon monitors on an expanded basis until the end of the financial year.

Speaker, on a positive note, Nico Dekker, CEO of Cape Town Film Studios recently praised the City of Cape Town for allowing the filming of a major blockbuster "Judge Dread" in the city. He said the value for money, natural surroundings and granting access to film on the Civic Centre concourse was the reason why Cape Town was chosen as the location. This is a major boost for our film industry and is sure to attract the same calibre of film producers in the future.

Speaker, I want to give Councillors some assurances. I can read my watch and tell the time. I am healthy. I do not suffer from a condition called premature detonation.

The switch I activated for the demolition of the two Athlone cooling towers on 22 August was not directly connected to the charges. The master blaster had the master switch. He made the call, like the captain of a ship or the pilot of an aircraft. Everything was in place, the area was safe and that waiting could pose risk. All you needed was for one child to emerge from a bush and you would have to stop and restart a lengthy process.

Before we blow everything out of proportion, we must be thankful that the process was technically flawless and safe. The towers had become a major and unpredictable safety risk. Aerial photographs show two doughnut rings of rubble in the exact footprint where the towers stood. There is no surrounding damage and there were no injuries. So, a big thank you to the team.

In conclusion I would like to commend the members of Civoc who dedicated their time to the City. They are:

Me. H Tager (Chairperson)

Adv. M Mdludlu

Mr. L September

Mr. L Swigelaar

Mr. R Wentzel

Mr. N Botha

Me. B Louw
Comm G Schooling
Cllr. A Traut
Cllr. C Thomas

Dr. Donald Craythorne who served as a member of the Committee since its establishment, passed away in mid 2010 and Cllr. P van Dalen resigned from the Committee in 2009 when he was appointed as a member of the Provincial Parliament. Thank you all once again.

Thank you.