

SPEECH BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF CAPE TOWN, ALDERMAN DAN PLATO: FULL SITTING OF COUNCIL – WEDNESDAY 11 MAY 2011

Councillors, City Manager, officials, members of the media and the public.

The past few months have been both exciting and challenging.

In Cape Town we are fortunate to have a strong and functional municipality staffed by people with expertise, experience and commitment. We have councillors who come from all walks of life and communities across our city. They represent their people, but also give their wisdom and knowledge.

Efficient service remains the cornerstone of the City of Cape Town. Many visitors and some in National Government regard us as the best run Metro in the country.

Every Mayor has a different approach. Looking back, I am grateful that I started my term by holding 105 public meetings across the city in the first year. I simply talked to people. I listened to their complaints, aspirations, needs and wants. I learnt much and understood things from their perspective. The biggest lesson I learnt was how important it is to be open, available and ready to listen.

Many residents, also some who support the opposition in Council, acknowledge the good that the City has done. We realise that, despite the many achievements, we cannot be complacent. There is a great deal more to be done.

The City has been hard at work over the past few years and this has borne fruit.

Our first priority for this term of office was to get the basics right. The foundation we laid was to provide infrastructure for economic growth, run an effective and clean government and focus on efficient regulation to enable rather than to control.

Our focus has been on water, sanitation, cleansing, electricity and housing – the basics of service delivery in local government. Much of this government's efforts have also gone into improving the physical security of our residents and law enforcement.

When we took office five years ago, we faced a number of organisational and financial problems. They needed to be fixed to realise our vision and programmes for Cape Town. We had to complete the amalgamation of the previous seven administrations into a new organisation and address the serious loss of experienced staff under the previous administration. Over

two years the administration was integrated with clear lines of management for every member of staff. The 22 different conditions of service were merged into a single set and employees doing similar work were placed on the same pay scale.

When we took stock five years ago, it was clear that the City's income was not enough to provide the level of services needed. We therefore increased property rates and service charges to the levels required for a modern city to function properly. This is never popular, but you must maintain, repair and plan ahead or expect to face severe problems.

We embarked on a major programme to collect the outstanding debt. Then we restructured our rates and tariffs to ensure a fair system. We distinguish between people who can pay and those who cannot pay because they are too poor. Those who qualify do not pay property rates or for refuse removal. They receive 10 500 litres of water free and 50 kilowatt hours of electricity free per month. We write off debts for those who accept the installation of a flow control device to regulate – not cut off - their water supply. The City now receives a 95% payment rate for the accounts sent out.

The second step we took was to leverage our future income streams through responsible loans. We have borrowed R4.2 billion on the South African Bond Market at good interest rates. We further leveraged income through partnerships with the National and Provincial Governments.

As a result we have spent R19 billion on infrastructure and other capital works during our five years in office. In the previous five-year term it was R7 billion.

We have focussed on basic service provision at a sustainable level as well as the services that are essential to economic growth.

The previous government gave many people access to electricity, water and sanitation without investing adequately in bulk infrastructure. You cannot continue to add more users to an existing system without increasing its capacity.

We therefore:

- strengthened the medium voltage electricity network in fast growing areas of the city and refurbished older parts of the network.
- upgraded the waste water treatment plants works to improve effluent standards. We built a major new waste water treatment plant.
- invested in the water supply system, focussing mainly on limiting water losses. We installed pressure reduction schemes and other

leak reduction programmes. The pipe replacement programme was upped from 7 km per year to 50 km per year. We are now starting a seven-year investment programme in our water scheme which will cost some R1.7 billion.

- changed our waste disposal system. Smaller waste disposal sites are full and had to be closed. We now transport refuse over greater distances to regional waste disposal sites. We have invested in waste transfer stations, where refuse collection trucks deliver their loads for bundling and transfer via rail or road trucks to the disposal site. We have also incorporated waste recycling systems into these transfer stations.

We committed to good, open and clean government. It is only by being open that we can deal with corruption and obtain the best level of services for our people with the limited resources available.

All meetings of Council's committees and the Mayoral Committee are open, other than those dealing with staff matters and land acquisitions. This is in stark contrast to other municipalities where the media and ratepayers are not able to scrutinise their municipality's decision making processes.

We take a tough line on fraud and corruption. All allegations are investigated. We have an in-house forensic team that reports directly to the City Manager and is supplemented by professional firms. Their investigations have resulted in disciplinary action against a number of officials, even very senior ones, often leading to dismissal and laying of criminal charges with the police.

Our governance is further strengthened by the internal audit department and risk management system. We have had unqualified audits for every year of our five year term. This is a significant achievement, given the overall performance of municipalities in South Africa.

Regulation is an essential part of not only national but local government. Regulation sets controls and limits, but handled properly, can also enable economic growth. Over the past five years we have rationalised and modernised some 100 years of bylaws that were inherited. We are finalising the replacement of many different planning regulations with a single set of regulations to cover the entire city. After five years of public engagement, we are in the final stages of implementing a single Zoning Scheme for the city as well as adopting an Integrated Spatial Framework for future development. All of these steps are important because it gives fairness and certainty to residents and businesses across the City.

Speaker, the focus on infrastructure-led growth has not compromised delivery to the poor. Cape Town has delivered more to its poor than any

other city in South Africa. Over the past five years we increased the total spend on indigent residents by almost R800 million, to a proposed R1.26 billion in the 2011/2012 draft budget.

Speaker, the City has also consistently met its delivery of housing targets for the past few years. It is necessary for us to work together with public and private agencies to address housing needs and to streamline processes. It was a major step forward when the City was awarded Housing Accreditation by National Government. This will give the City more control over housing delivery in Cape Town.

Over the past four years, the City delivered 33 200 housing opportunities, averaging 8 300 per year. We have consistently spent 100% of our housing budget allocation from national government. We have demonstrated to national government that if they increase our budget for housing we will be able to spend it. There is still a huge backlog as we gain 18 000 families per year, but housing delivery has increased from 1 808 opportunities in 2003/2004 to 8 950 in the last financial year. This is year two of a five to six year plan for the phased upgrading of approximately 7 775 Council rental units. This will cost some R1,2 billion.

For good governance you need good decision-making. Over the past term of office, Sub-Council meetings have increased from 126 in 2006 to 241 in 2010. This is significant because an average of five decisions are made at every meeting, thus speeding up the approval process.

Cape Town is blessed with natural beauty. It is our competitive edge. Through the completed Biodiversity Network we have identified critically important conservation areas. We proclaimed 15 000 hectares of City-owned land under the new Protected Areas Act. The Cape High Court, ruled that a mining permit in terms of national legislation does not override the City's jurisdiction in regulating land use. We successfully hosted the tri-annual ICLEI World Congress in March 2006. The conference was acknowledged by the ICLEI Secretary General and delegates as the best held thus far.

When we took office we found a floundering Safety and Security Directorate without effective leadership. It was unable to render effective services to our residents. In just three years, the Directorate has been completely transformed and given capacity in terms of equipment, manpower, direction and leadership to become one of the best - if not the best - in the country.

We established a Disaster Risk Management Centre and fire and rescue fleet. Staff numbers In Disaster Risk Management have grown from 35 to

83, in Law Enforcement from 303 to 662, Traffic Services by 160, the 107 emergency centre from 29 to 74 and Fire Services by more than 200 staff members.

We have established specialist units for land invasion, displaced people, drugs, metals theft, liquor enforcement, informal trading, loss recovery, graffiti, problem buildings, the Vice Squad and the Ghost Squad. Together they have scored major successes.

Through all of these interventions we have secured the provision of basic services for the medium term. We can also respond to the anticipated growing demand for electricity, water, sanitation and refuse removal. We are facing rapid urbanisation. We need to plan for another half-a-million to one million additional people over the next 20 years. We have established a dedicated Urbanisation Unit which will work across all relevant City departments. This is critical if we are to address the substantial challenges posed by rapid urbanisation.

The major initiatives that will take Cape Town forward over the next decade are mobility and connectivity – a public transport and a broadband network. We have taken a bold step to improve public transport and mobility. The Integrated Rapid Transit system with the MyCiTi bus service and feeder services is rolling out. Over the long term, this should relieve congestion, reduce the use of private cars and our carbon footprint and improve access to economic opportunity. It comprises dedicated bus lanes, stations where passengers will pre-ticket, specially designed busses that enable rapid boarding, all of which leads to a rapid travel time that will get people to their destination quicker than using their cars. I was proud to travel on the first bus of the new service towards the West Coast where people do not have the public transport system others in the metro have. It will connect Capetonians to opportunities for work and play.

We are also installing a 300 km broadband network across the city that is primarily aimed at linking all our municipal buildings. We are working together with the private sector who are also installing multiple networks across the city. We will assist them to access the poorer and low density parts of the city where it may not otherwise be economical for them to extend their networks.

At the same time, international companies are laying undersea cables that will in the next two years significantly increase Cape Town's internet access capacity to the rest of the world. These interventions will enhance Cape Town's desirability as a destination for the service and creative industries.

We must build on these successes towards our new vision - to expand opportunities for people. We must continue to invest on our infrastructure. Public transport, connectivity, investing in tourist infrastructure, the expansion of the International Convention Centre and improved safety are all key drivers of this future vision..

We must invest in our most important asset – the people of Cape Town. Whatever local government can do in terms of education and skills training we must do and work with other spheres of government.

With the 2010 Soccer World Cup almost one year behind us, some might say it is time to move on. But the Soccer World Cup is a global event that comes once in a lifetime. There are 270 million people in the world playing soccer. The cumulative television viewership for the World Cup was 26 billion (four times more than the Olympic Games).

Hosting the World Cup in Cape Town and hosting it in such a memorable and successful way was the highlight of this term of office. What can be bigger?

It was no easy task for Cape Town to build the stadium and all the other infrastructure on time. But we did it. A total of R12.38 billion was invested in the city's public sector infrastructure, of which the City itself only provided funding for R2.68 billion.

We overcame all the obstacles – time, money, capacity, readiness, legal challenges, safety, security, transport, and logistics. This was no mean feat! Cape Town greatly appreciates the financial and other forms of support from the National and Provincial Governments. But make no mistake, the City of Cape Town was ultimately and legally responsible and accountable. This was a huge obligation and a huge risk. But we turned it into a major opportunity.

We hosted eight matches, over half a million people in the stadium, over half a million on the fan walk, over half a million at the Grand Parade fan fest. Cape Town worked, it was clean, it was safe. Capetonians were great hosts. They welcomed the world. We had "gees". We had a ball. We showed the world.

Speaker, we gained major upgrades and face lifts for our city. We worked as a team, we all delivered on the game plan. We raised the bar. Above all we proved to ourselves just what a great city we are. Let us keep reminding ourselves how much is possible when we work together.

Through hard work, focus and the contributions of many we have a proud scorecard:

1. In October 2009, BEE ratings agency Empowerdex found that "Cape Town is clearly the best city in the country for service delivery". The Index, which considers provision of housing, water, sanitation, electricity and waste removal services, combines figures for the current status of household access to services with an improvement index over six years.
2. The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs' UHabs report found that Cape Town is the best City for service delivery in the country.
3. The City of Cape Town has received six consecutive clean audits from the Auditor General.
4. The TNS survey shows that Capetonians are happiest with services compared to other municipalities.
5. The 2010 FIFA World Cup™ Host City Cape Town Green Goal programme won the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Sport and Environment Award.
6. TripAdvisor voted Cape Town the top travel destination for 2011.
7. Cape Town's beaches are the second best in the world, according to Lonely Planet in their 2011 survey.
8. The Condé Nast voted Cape Town one of the world's Top 20 cities as well as the top city in Africa and the Middle East, in its Readers' Travel Awards 2010.
9. The City of Cape Town has been rated the best municipality for the second consecutive year for its access to information policies and practices
10. The City of Cape Town was awarded a 98% score in the Blue Drop Drinking Water Quality certification process.

Speaker, I have taken the time to highlight just a few of the major successes that this administration has worked hard to achieve during the past term. My thanks must go to the people of Cape Town: you are the reason that we work tirelessly to ensure that you receive the services that you deserve. My engagements with residents have spurred me on and inspired me to strive to improve our City. I know that Capetonians' spirit of community will only grow in the coming years.

To the officials – you have all been readily available to implement the plans and strategies that made this city better. Your dedication and commitment to the City is the reason why we are the best in the country. I know that the next Mayor will be privileged to benefit from your guidance and skills. I thank you for this.

Speaker, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the councillors here today. Thank you for helping me serve this city over the past two years – it has been a challenging, but extremely rewarding experience. I am sure that those of you who are returning for another term will uphold

the standard of excellence that has been set and continue to improve services to our residents.

I wish you all well.

Lastly, it goes without saying, please be sure to cast your vote on 18 May – the future of our city is everyone’s responsibility and it is your civic duty. Local government’s central mandate is to deliver services, therefore, if we want to change and better our city we as residents need to vote in the right leaders to do this job. Be part of this process and vote on 18 May.

Thank you.