

CONSERVATIVES IN ACTION



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CIAsa Local Government Policy

In order to improve the quality of life for all our citizens, Residents require:

- well managed, properly funded, skilled, competent and capable personnel to ensure that our municipalities have the capacity and the requisite skills to provide quality and sustainable services to the residents of the respective Metro's, District's and the local municipalities.

OUR PROMISE

Wherever we have Councillors, we shall ensure that all residents will not be neglected while we sit in Council.

Residents can be assured that we will strive for them to receive:

- clean potable water,
- clean public spaces,
- sanitation infrastructure that works all the time,
- regular and efficient refuse removal,
- proper and thorough infrastructure development informed by consultation with communities,
- effective maintenance of roads, landfills, rivers and streams, beaches, sidewalks, lighting, parks, recreational facilities, clinics, swimming pools, libraries, cemeteries , waste water works and municipal owned SOE's and Office facilities,
- continuous electricity supply sourced through local power stations, including renewable energy,
- presentable, efficient and well-trained municipal servants that are representative of all groupings,
- municipal policing that is visible throughout the municipality, well trained, with full representation of all groupings.

Our VIEW

We see the dissatisfaction of ratepayers and residents across the country,

We see the low levels of trust ratepayers and residents have,

We see the high levels of frustration ratepayers and residents have to endure on a daily basis across all municipalities without exception,

as a result of:

- a lack of effective and equitable municipal services,
- bad planning,
- poor and incompetent administration and councillors
- corruption, nepotism, jobs for pals and cadre deployment,
- being charged high rates and taxes but not having commensurate municipal services,
- ineffective municipal licensing services,
- continuous leaking water pipes,
- frequency of high levels of e-coli @ beaches,
- a littered environment and filthy inner cities
- polluted streams, rivers, wetlands and beaches
- poor workmanship resulting in work being redone a number of times because of the lack of skills,
- regression and an inability to maintain infrastructure across all departments,
- a lack of prudent financial management,
- an inability of consequence management for wrongdoers, because of political affiliation,
- poor billing services
- poor maintenance of parks and gardens, swimming pools, sport facilities, pavements, cemeteries, street lighting, storm water systems, libraries and clinics and licensing offices

- ineffective communication between both PR & Ward councillors with residents,
- habitual call centres either not working or not working, effectively,
- political instability in council
- dismal & limited services to suburbs,
- an alarming increase in the number of sewage leaks and effluent causing health problems
- chaotic housing list systems,
- failure to deal with construction mafia's,
- malfeasance and collusion in awarding of tenders,
- ineffective municipal police services and acts of bribery,
- an alarming increase in the deteriorating of roads,

Our CONCLUSION

The sad reality of this malaise, maladministration and poor governance, is that it:

- limits the growth and development of the economy,
- forces businesses to migrate in areas where service delivery is poor, ineffective and has disintegrated,
- Inhibits the municipalities to deliver good, quality and equitable services.
- Inhibits the direct investment to a municipality,
- produces health, environmental issues & low morale,
- produces wastage of valuable state resources and money,
- produces a dissatisfaction and no confidence in the requisite local government/s,
- produces a steady decline in the quality of life,
- creates and encourages a continuous cycle of rates and taxes increases,

These challenges at local government level are complex and they manifest themselves very uniquely in each municipality.

COALITION COUNCILS & LACK OF SERVICES

What is crystal clear is that post the local Govt elections, because there has been No outright political party that has won many of the Metro's and a number of Districts and local municipalities, various political parties have coalesced to form what is described as a Coalition Govt.

Since the elections, the emphasis in Councils is spent on parties directing most of their time, effort and energy in jostling for political power in 'no confidence' motions.

The sad and factual reality has become 'lack of delivery of services' to ratepayers and residents.

We call on ratepayers and residents to vote wisely in the future so as to ensure;

- their vote is not muzzled through parties doing the opposite of what they had stated in the ir election campaign, in their quest for political power, patronage and status.
- their vote produces a stable municipal government/s, not caught up in power grabs where the only winner is the political party and the incumbent Councillor,

As the CIAsa, we support practical solutions to local municipal challenges that are premised on principles of:

- good, clean & transparent governance,
- adherence to the rule of Law,
- quasi privatisation, decentralisation and devolution of power,
- professional, equitable and excellent public services that provides good value for the rates being paid,
- development of skills of municipal employees,
- empowerment of communities through rigorous delivery of services,
- financial prudence and financial controls to ensure municipalities are beyond reproach,
- merit based appointments of strategic employees and senior staff at all levels,
- transparent and open tender boards comprising of government and private sector qualified personnel specific to the requisite tender,
- strong, dynamic, capable & representative leadership,
- responsible, accountable personnel who accept consequences for poor performance & or misconduct,
- management that puts the interests of the citizens first,

- a caring local government,
- management driven by family values,

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RECOVERY PLAN

As CIAA, in order to radically turn our municipalities into effective, working, results oriented and service delivery based institutions, our Plan to restore confidence to ratepayers and residents is, namely:

1) IMMEDIATE INTERVENTION TO ACHIEVE GOOD GOVERNANCE

- Review current legislation so as to strengthen local government capacity,
- Strive to ensure more powers are devolved to municipalities.
- Review budget allocations to municipalities that are commensurate to challenges per municipality.
- Review the executive leadership model of governance. Where there are no outright winners, Government of Local Unity - GLU must exist.
- Review and eliminate bureaucracy and red tape that reduces local economic growth and progress.
- Establish a national forum for best practice at local government level where proven experience can be shared to bring real change to struggling municipalities.
- Provincial governments must be decisive and intervene quicker where municipalities fail to deliver services, pay creditors or where there is inept governance.
- A two-tier system (city-states) should be considered in certain areas of the country, where state and municipal functions could be combined under a single authority.

2) STRENGTHENING THE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AND SKILLS

- Councillors must be required to undergo obligatory financial management training.
- Improve HR capacity and skills through the recruitment of best person for the job'
- Introduce continuous training and development of employees.
- Review remuneration packages of skilled personnel in smaller and rural municipalities.
- Ensure that municipalities reflect and represent the demographics of the province.
- Review the current remuneration scheme so as to attract top calibre of skills to municipalities.
- Ensure vacant positions in all departments across all municipalities must be filled with the right candidates through transparent and credible recruitment practices.
- Restructure SALGA , as an Authoritative Body rather than a politically led entity.

3) IMPROVED FINANCIAL SYSTEMS

- An intensive campaign to improve skills in budgeting, safeguarding, monitoring (financial reporting) and auditing (accountability) must be launched and implemented from national level.
- Communities, Councils, speakers, mayors and MPACs must insist on:
 - a robust culture of disciplined financial management
 - effective debt collection strategies
 - credible financial statements
 - proper financial record keeping
 - a workable plan to reduce the dependency on consultants
- Recruit experienced individuals to financial management positions.

- Provincial treasuries and Cogta departments must assist municipalities to develop and implement financial recovery plans.
- Control measures must be improved and implemented without fear or favour.
- Accurate disclosure of irregular expenditure must be emphasised.
- Provincial Cogta departments must monitor more strictly how municipalities use consultants.
- Eskom and waterboards should be prevented from cutting off services to whole communities if they aren't paid by the municipality, instead the errant municipality's senior leadership should lose authority.
- Ensure harsh sanctions and consequences against officials found guilty of financial mismanagement and irregularities.

4) MANAGEMENT OF ASSETS & IMPROVED PERFORMANCE

- Review of Public Private Partnerships need to be established across all towns, cities and districts for all infrastructure projects,
- Ensure that at least 60% of total budget is directed towards delivery of services and infrastructure projects,
- Every municipality must have a plan that's deals with loans & external debt ,
- Project management and contract management skills must urgently be improved.
- Ensure municipalities that receive infrastructure grants must be closely monitored through external Audit Authorities,.
- Review and address the over reliance on external consultants.
- Review and implement a National Hygienic Plan to ensure that towns and cities are clean, attractive and well maintained,
- Improve antidumping legislation,
- Review the municipal housing list/s to ensure that the allocation of council housing is fair, transparent and that all racial groups have equal & direct access to housing.
- Ensure clean potable water is readily available to every resident of the municipality.
- Ensure that proper and working sanitation services are available to every resident in the respective municipality. Ensure that every community has street lighting and household lighting.
- Ensure that District municipalities are effective and work in unison with Metro's where practically possible,

5) TACKLING CORRUPTION AND MALFEASANCE

- Legislation must be enacted that forces municipalities & Police services to produce a Safety & Security Plan to restore law and order in every municipality.
- Revisit and review the way that executive leadership is structured in municipalities.
- Review the municipal supply chain process to ensure that 40% of all work must be sourced from sme's and or local communities.
- Restructure tender boards by incorporating the private sector skills, so as to eliminate malfeasance, corruption and nepotism.
- Any public servant/s, official/s, contractor/s, councillor/s or member/s of the executive who have been found guilty of State corruption must have the harshest & severest sanction imposed on them,

6) IMPROVING ACCOUNTABILITY & DELIVERY OF SERVICES

- Ensure an Oversight Authoritative system is implemented that holds Council Office bearers accountable for their failures.
- Ensure this Oversight Authoritative system has the legislative tools to implement harsh sanctions and remedies.
- Implement legislation that ensures Municipalities appoint up to 50% of sme's, across all groupings.
- Ensure systems are in place for MPAC Committee's to sign off Audit firm/s approval every month before Council's adopt Resolutions at Council meetings.
- A peer review process through appointment of additional sme Audit Firms must be introduced in all Councils.
- Strong, Immediate & punitive action must be taken by Council against any employee or Office bearer of Council, for any proven offence/s.
- Provincial Gov't's must also be held to account for the actions of municipalities in the respective provinces, failing which National Govt intervention is required, not exceeding 180 days.
- Provincial Gov't's must review their regulation/s that deal with non-performance/s of municipalities to ensure compliance.

7) POLITICAL STABILITY IN MUNICIPALITIES

- National Govt must enact legislation that makes it difficult for municipal Councils to bypass and flout supply chain processes for the unlawful enrichment of those in power within those Councils.
- National government must introduce a legislative framework makes it onerous on political parties in Councils to be held accountable and punishable by law so as to ensure that effective delivery of municipal services is fully implemented at all times.

8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & COOPERATION

- Create effective communication and participation systems with ratepayers and residents.
- Consult and incorporate communities into projects, particularly if it affects where they live.
 - These processes should be people-centred and inclusive,
- Ensure local Chambers of Business and the private sector are fully involved in municipal enhancement and results projects,
 - Ensure municipal employees understand that they are working in the interests of the ratepayers and residents of their respective municipalities,

9. IMMEDIATE PLAN TO ERADICATE INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

- Ensure that the immediate eradication of informal settlements needs **STRONG LEADERSHIP & ACTION.**
 - Ensure that this plan must be bold, decisive and Not talk,
 - Review and correct the supply chain tender processes,
 - Ensure that **Govt makes land available immediately, on a large scale, for housing.**
 - Review and or scrap and correct the current supply chain tender system with a system that:

- awards the allocation of the housing tenders to small businesses & entrepreneurs, viz, plumbers, carpenters, plasterers, with their skilled and semi skilled and unskilled workers, to make housing an absolute and Immediate reality! This was done during apartheid, why can't it be done now!

8) REVERT TO BOROUGH STATUSES IN CERTAIN INSTANCES

- It is quite apparent that the current Govt model of Metro's, Districts and local municipalities has failed citizens.
- It is evident is that these large, bloated, complex municipalities have failed to deliver fast, nimble services to ratepayers and residents,
- This is borne out by the growing number of dysfunctional infrastructure across South Africa,
- This is further borne out by the growing year on year double digit increases in violent protest actions and damage to property across the country,
- Ratepayers need quick turnaround, not some centralization of power that executes services based on how residents voted.

To this end, as the CIAA, we strongly advocate for the reintroduction of local boroughs to enable these entities to be closer to the residents and ratepayers.

9) COALITION COUNCILS & LACK OF DELIVERY OF SERVICES

- What is crystal clear is that since the last two local Govt elections, given that there has been No outright political party in most of the Metro's and a number of Districts and local municipalities, various political parties have coalesced to form what is described as a Coalition Govt.
- Post the elections, the emphasis in Councils has been spent on political parties directing most of their time, effort and energy in jostling for political power through 'no confidence' motions.
- This bleak state of affairs has regrettably led to 'slow and or lack of delivery of services' to ratepayers and residents.
- As the CIAA, we call on ratepayers and residents to ensure that their vote is not muzzled through the actions of political parties who once in Council, do the opposite of what they had stated in their election campaign manifesto's, in their quest for political power, patronage and status.

Likewise, we call on ratepayers and residents to ensure that they vote wisely and ensure their vote produces stable municipal government/s, rather than the political power grabs where the only winners are the political parties and the incumbent Councillors,

Our POLICY POSITION

Dysfunctional municipalities suffer as a result of:

- leadership instability (political and administrative),
- a chronic lack of skills,
- poor oversight by councils,
- financial problems,
- labour issues through protests and strikes,
- lack of consequence management,
- weak interventions,

This dysfunction of municipalities across the country has led to a serious investment blockages for the enhancement of economic growth and development.

This impedes investment and hinders the effective functioning of the local economy.

As a consequence, this reduces the flow of investment funds into the local economy and ultimately leads to the degradation of social and economic infrastructure, including the environment.

Sadly, the current local supply chain economic systems are designed to benefit cadres, elites, the connected. The consequence of this is marginalization of ordinary folks and the perpetuation of a corrupt and closed supply chain management system.

The only losers sadly are the poor and ordinary middle class folk.

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