

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING HELD AT TOWN HALL, WALVIS BAY ON
THURSDAY 09 JULY 2025 AT 18:00

Councillors Present:

Cllr Trevino Forbes

Cllr Buddy Bramwell

Officials Present:

Mrs Victoria Kapenda

Mr. Frans !Gonteb

Ms Krischka Stoffels

Mr Johannes litha

Ms. Shirley Tjaveondja

Members from the Fire brigade

Summary

The meeting addressed a wide range of pressing issues within the Walvis Bay Municipality, focusing on waste management, road maintenance, housing development, and debt collection. Key developments included the commencement of low-cost housing construction, the ongoing review of Redforce's role in debt collection, procurement-related delays affecting infrastructure projects, and the municipality's financial and operational challenges.

Residents voiced strong concerns over the lack of service delivery, road disrepair, and illegal dumping, while the council called for greater community cooperation and accountability. Discussions emphasised the need transparency and responsiveness from municipal authorities.

Resident Concerns

1. Waste Management Challenges

- The council acknowledged inefficiencies in waste collection, particularly in high-density areas such as Kuisebmond, due to mechanical failures of municipal trucks.
- Private contractors were engaged to assist with collection and the cleaning of open spaces, though they too faced mechanical setbacks.
- The need for regularised waste disposal, increased collection frequency, and resident responsibility was emphasised.
- Illegal dumping and safety at the landfill site remain a major concern. The presence of individuals residing on the site poses risks, necessitating improved monitoring and enforcement.

2. Road Maintenance and Traffic Management

- Significant concerns were raised about deteriorating road conditions across Walvis Bay.
- Short- and long-term road repair is currently underway. The council is currently navigating delays caused by procurement issues and objections.
- The use of truck ports and better traffic regulation, particularly addressing trucks parked throughout the town, is under consideration.

3. Debt Collection and Redforce

- The role of Redforce, a debt collection agency, was critically examined. Residents raised concerns about billing errors, high commission charges, and an aggressive collection approach.
- The council intends to amend current policies to reduce payment requirements for debt settlements by August.
- Plans are in place to strengthen internal municipal capacity to manage collections post-Redforce, with dedicated personnel to be employed.
- Improved communication, clearer billing, and a more resident-friendly approach were agreed upon as necessary steps forward.

4. Housing Development Projects

- The national housing project is progressing, with Phase 1 aiming to deliver 200 homes. Contractors are expected to build a minimum of five homes each.
- Weekly inspections are scheduled to ensure progress and construction quality.
- Construction is also commencing at Farm 37, with a focus on low-cost housing for the homeless and those living in informal settlements.

5. Infrastructure and Communal Resources

- Ongoing infrastructure projects include pipeline maintenance and a lagoon storage initiative. Delays have resulted from contract terminations, with new works expected to span 12 months.

6. Municipal Management and Procurement

- The council highlighted difficulties in procurement processes, impacting recruitment, project roll-outs, and service delivery.

7. Community Engagement and Responsibilities

- The council called for increased community involvement and responsible behaviour, urging residents to report issues and participate in finding solutions.
- Residents were reminded to pay municipal dues and communicate financial challenges to avoid service disconnections.
- There was a collective call for accountability and competent leadership ahead of the regional elections, stressing the impact of leadership on service quality and progress.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Waste Management

Q: How will the Municipality address the issue of waste in Walvis Bay?

The Municipality will intensify cleaning of open spaces by increasing the frequency of clean-ups. Enforcement against illegal dumping will also be strengthened to discourage offenders and maintain cleaner surroundings. Additionally, the waste collection capacity will be improved with the introduction of new trucks, ensuring more efficient service delivery to residents.

Road Maintenance

Q: What steps will be taken to improve the state of the roads?

The Municipality will partner with local businesses who are willing to contribute to repairing roads. Both long-term and short-term solutions are being developed and will be implemented to ensure sustainability. Furthermore, a road repairs schedule will be shared publicly so residents are kept informed about progress and timelines.

Debt Collection

Q: How will outstanding municipal debts be managed?

To ease repayment burdens, the Municipality will amend policies to reduce payments required for settlements. These proposed policy changes will be tabled before Council for approval. In addition, plans are underway to employ internal debt collection staff before the current Redforce contract ends, thereby bringing the process in-house for greater accountability.

Housing

Q: What progress is being made in providing housing?

Construction at Farm 37 will commence immediately with the first phase now underway. To maintain accountability and ensure quality, weekly inspections of all housing projects will continue. This consistent monitoring is intended to fast-track delivery while upholding building standards.

Utilities Monitoring

Q: How will the Municipality deal with illegal utility connections?

The Municipality will strengthen monitoring of illegal connections across the city. Follow-up actions will also be taken on accounts that were previously disconnected to ensure compliance and prevent revenue loss.

Leadership & Communication

Q: How will the Municipality improve leadership, communication, and service delivery?

Municipal authorities are committed to improving transparency through regular updates to the public. A newly hired Procurement Manager will oversee the execution of procurement plans and clear the backlog of outstanding processes. Recruitment for the HR General Manager position is ongoing, and the role will be filled soon, alongside other key vacancies, to strengthen internal capacity. In addition, the Municipality will meet with developers to advance discussions on truck port developments, signalling a proactive approach to infrastructure growth.

The meeting concluded by 21:00