

Safety a concern for West Rand residents

COMMITMENT: WELL-BEING OF LOCAL POPULATION A PRIORITY FOR MANELI

1. Mr Mayor, an elderly couple was murdered on their farm recently. In January, if memory serves. The cops should combat crime, that I know, but what measures do we have in place as a municipal entity to ensure the safety of those who live here? – Jo

► The West Rand District Municipality (WRDM) remains committed to the provisions of section 152 (d) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, which states, amongst other things, that “municipalities must promote a safe and healthy environment”, thus the WRDM, in collaboration with other law enforcement agencies, ie. the three constituent local municipalities, the SAPS and the Provincial Department of Community Safety, established a District Law Enforcement Co-ordinating Committee (DLECC) coordinated by the WRDM to strengthen law enforcement in the region, develop and execute area specific safety programmes and projects.

► In terms of the Municipality, one of the Specific Social Crime Management Focus Areas in the WRDM Safety Plan is “Rural Safety”, which includes, but is not limited to, farm attacks. Already with the SAPS in the cluster, we have established Rural Safety Fora at each police station within the district, which are meeting monthly to look at strategies on rural safety issues.

► Our Community Safety Officers and Traffic Officers are heavily involved in these Fora. Among others we have already started with the development of Rural Safety plans working with communities focusing on rural areas.

► The community safety programmes include those which are aimed at reducing crime in all rural areas throughout the jurisdiction of the West Rand and they also entail sub programmes such as “know your neighbourhood” and “community patrollers”, which are conducted on an ad-hoc basis in consultation with the Provincial Department of Community Safe-

ty. It must also be noted that as part of crime reduction in the West Rand, the WRDM as part of its Regional five-year plan, has committed to expand the CCTV project to rural areas and townships.

2. What are you doing to make sure that the defaulters within the municipality (those who do not pay their bills on time) are brought to book? Their reluctance to pay negatively impacts on service delivery and it is not fair on those who actually do pay on time. – Mimi

► Non-payment of services is a serious concern of the municipalities in the West Rand and across the country. Indeed, this impacts negatively on provision of service delivery or quality thereof.

► As such, we have embarked on massive civic education on the importance of paying for services rendered by the district, as well as constituent local municipalities.

**Q&A WITH
WEST RAND MAYOR
BOYCE MANELI**



► Through a shared services approach, we have put our heads together to develop creative ways of encouraging people to pay.

► One such means is through ward-based planning and budgeting to award wards that pay for services a prize. The prize, after being awarded, will be used on a service delivery project in the winning ward.

► In addition, there is a study commissioned by the district to look at the financial viability of municipalities. The focus of the study includes coming up with more creative revenue collection initiatives, getting mining companies to pay for the services, etc.

► Working with government structures at ward level, such as ward councillors, ward committees and others, through a service delivery vehicle called “Ntithisano”, we have managed to maintain active citizenry where seven days’ response time is set

to deal with community queries.

► Therefore, defaulters are subjected to the processes of a municipality to try to rectify the situation. After all has failed, the municipality has no option but to exercise its right to withhold provision of service to them as a last remedy.

3. Dear Mayor, unemployment is rife. What is our municipality doing to create jobs for unemployed people in the community, especially the youth?

► It is common sense that municipalities cannot employ beyond their capacity and thus the WRDM is currently engaging the private sector in the area of jurisdiction to commit in ensuring that their recruitment processes must consider and prioritise the residents of the West Rand during their recruitment processes.

► Over and above that, the WRDM and its local municipalities are engaging with various stakeholders, including government departments, to increase poverty alleviation programmes such as EPWP and other internships and learnerships.

► The establishment of cooperatives is also one of the areas that the WRDM is currently exploring to help community members establish their own enterprises.

► In February, 2017, we held the West Rand Economic Summit in Merafong City Local Municipality, where over 400 delegates attended. The summit was aimed at identifying opportunities and strategies to revitalise the West Rand economy through re-industrialisation, advancing the cause of black people, youth and women to enable them to become key players in the economy. Some of these initiatives include providing emerging farmers with mechanisation, exposing emerging hospitality owners to internal and external markets through the Tourism Indaba, training in construction material to entrepreneurs who are members of the construction input incubator,

► Matriculants will be exposed to career and job opportunities through the West Rand Career Expo.