

## Something must be done to stop municipal rot

Mismanagement of municipalities is appalling, writes **Bennito Motitswe**, Tshwane.

**I**T depresses to read through the auditor-general's findings.

Some of the latest findings affecting our municipalities suggest R70.9bn, or just 19% of municipal budgets totalling R378 billion, "was spent by municipalities with clean audits".

This should serve as the last shock to push for bold action to erase "fruitless and wasteful" expenditure from our books.

Municipalities are the most immediate public gates of our democratic government and it is tantamount to betraying our vision of a constitutional democracy if steps are not taken urgently to change how local government works.

The biggest chunk of our national budgetary allocation must go to local government to enable it to live up to the challenge of delivering services efficiently and effectively.

But how can this be done when financial audits annually demonstrate such a corruptible and appalling state of mismanagement?

Something must be done to correct the recurring widespread financial mismanagement prevalent in many public institutions generally – and across our under-resourced municipalities in particular.

We must hope that the upcoming ANC national policy conference will find new approaches to correct whatever is causing such unacceptable financial mismanagement.

All the aspirations in the Freedom Charter will never be realised if there is no good governance.