

‘Service delivery vastly improved under the DA’

Mayor says they inherited R2bn debt from ANC, but whittled it down to surplus of just under R700m



Mayor Solly Msimanga.

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MAYOR Solly Msimanga has hailed the manner in which the City of Tshwane rendered basic services to residents in the two years since his DA-led administration assumed office.

He was speaking at a media briefing where mayors of the DA-run metros of Tshwane, Joburg and Nelson Mandela Bay gave feedback on the performance of their administrations since the start of the current local government term in 2016.

Delivering his report, Msimanga praised the quality of ser-

vices provided to residents, which he said had dramatically improved since the DA took office.

The City had worked hard to improve the quality of water in Hammanskraal and the surrounding areas, he said.

Residents in those areas had previously embarked on violent protests, complaining that the water was smelly and unfit for human consumption.

Msimanga said that problem was now a thing of the past, after the upgrading of the Temba Water Purification Plant, which improved the quality of the water.

In terms of governance, he said that under the DA-led administration the bloated top management was reduced to free up money for

service delivery.

During the previous ANC administration the municipality had people working in an acting capacity in executive positions.

To address the problem, he said, his administration put a stop to the “Hollywood-style” by employing the right people in permanent positions.

Msimanga reiterated that his administration inherited a deficit of R2 billion when it took over from the ANC-led municipality.

To date, that deficit had been reduced to a surplus of just under R700 million.

“Tshwane is the fastest growing city in Africa,” he said, adding that the rating agency Moody’s had moved Tshwane’s economic

status from negative to stable.

Two years ago, the City set itself a target to attract R10.5bn in investment, and had already attracted R4.8bn.

Msimanga also alluded to a report to be tabled soon in the council regarding the insourcing of 4 000 security guards.

With regard to human settlements, Msimanga said his administration inherited 185 informal settlements and more than 200 000 housing backlogs.

He expressed confidence to tackle the housing challenges head-on and said the City could not always rely on the national government to “free up money” for housing programmes.

“We will never be able to fix the backlog in a shorter space of time,” Msimanga said.

He announced that Tshwane was building 40 RDP houses, using R5.1m raised from the sale of the mayoral mansion in Muckleneuk last year.

He was worried about the corruption that was prevalent in the RDP housing list, saying he was engaging Joburg mayor Herman Mashaba and other counterparts on how to tackle it.

Msimanga cited the example of people in Olievenhoutbosch, where many were promised allocation for the same RDP houses. This led to fights over the houses, he said.

DA leader Mmusi Maimane

praised the city for its allocation of R137.2m towards the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) initiatives.

“Last September, the much-needed reforms to the EPWP recruitment policy were introduced, effectively ending the system of insiders and outsiders disrupting the EPWP job opportunities,” he said.

The City had made inroads over the past two years towards stabilising its finances.

“This was achieved by strengthening the controls over the supply chain processes, slashing unauthorised and unnecessary expenditure and extricating the City from unlawful and expensive contracts,” Maimane said.