

Response to demands not positive, claims OU

Bianca Du Plessis

A list of 22 demands, with a number of sub-headings, were handed to the municipality on Monday 5 November during a meeting attended by representatives from communities across the Overstrand.

Overstrand Municipality (OM) responded to the list of demands late on Wednesday 7 November. OM indicated that they cannot meet seven of the demands and referred two others to different governmental departments.

The municipality indicated that it cannot adhere to Overstrand Unite's demand for a moratorium on all public land sales and lease agreements. It also shot down the organisation's demand that all housing developments be stopped and for a human settlements committee to be established to work with the Overstrand Planning Department.

In his response Overstrand Executive mayor Dudley Coetzee stated: "The planning of housing projects is done in consultation with Social Compacts. Broader consultation with regard to housing development is part of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP)/Budget process. The housing plan is a sector plan of the IDP (see pages 115 to 142 of the 1st Review 2018/19) and the community is annually afforded the opportunity to comment on the draft IDP. Your demand therefore cannot be adhered to."

Coetzee said a list of all public land that was sold in the last 20 years will be made available to OU in due course. With regard to the demand that a list of land owned by the municipality, including land that has not yet been transferred from the Overberg District Municipality be made available, Coetzee answered: "Due to the voluminous nature of this information, it will be made available as soon as possible, except for land that has not been transferred from the Overberg District Municipality."

The mayor referred questions about the list of land in the Overstrand that is owned by the ODM to the district municipality.

One of the few demands that received a positive response is the demand for skips to be placed in certain areas. The municipality stated that skips have already been placed in Zwelihle and that they plan to place additional skips at the edge of Schulphoek land and at Die Kop in Stanford.

Another positive response was that Council approval has been obtained for the transfer of 90 housing units to residents of Peach House in Zwelihle.

"Internal discussions are being held to consider the transfer of the 88 hostel units (rental units) in Zwelihle to tenants of the hostels. The current challenge is the subdivision of the affected properties (erven). The Administration is engaging with the committee of the hostel dwellers," was the response to another demand.

In response to the demand that all municipal communications, press



Overstrand mayor Dudley Coetzee.

Photo: Bianca Du Plessis

releases and advertisements sent to the media regarding tenders, zoning and housing, be sent to Overstrand Unite, the municipality answered: "The execution of your demand is not possible, as the Municipality cannot entertain only your demands and exclude other organisations/individuals. Section 21 of the Systems Act provides for the manner in which communications to the community must take place and it is being adhered to."

In his response Coetzee rejected the demands that municipal manager Coenie Groenewald be fired and for the dissolution of the council, stating several legal factors.

The demand for a high school in Kleinmond was referred to the Western Cape Education Department.

The mayor also stated that they could not address the demands regarding Paradise Park as it is privately owned property.

He added: "Overstrand Unite has already been informed that the Schulphoek matter is currently being dealt with by the Provincial Minister of Human Settlements and his department."

Regarding the demand that land in Hawston identified for housing should be made available immediately Coetzee said portion 8 of farm number 572 is currently the subject of a court battle between the Western Cape Department of Public Works (WCDPW) and the Hawston Sea Farms Foundation (HSF).

"The Municipality has requested the WCDPW to transfer all the land that will not be transferred to the HSF as a result of the outcome of the court case, to the municipality for the extension of Hawston," he stated. He added that the municipality has submitted an application to the Western Cape Department of Human Settlements for funding to purchase portion 6 of farm number 575 in order to secure the land for future housing needs.

Overstrand Unite stated their dissatisfaction with the mayor's response.

"We find the response cold and not in the spirit of finding solutions," said Vanessa Swanepoel of Overstrand Unite.