

The list of complaints is endless

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Municipal manager of the City of Mbombela Local Municipality (CMLM), Neil Diamond, and his team of managers bravely faced agitated residents of White River at a meeting in the town hall recently.

General complaints about the dire water and electricity situation in town were aggravated by a power outage of longer than 50 hours after a transformer had exploded at the beginning of the recent long weekend.

Diamond promised that the temporary transformer is to be replaced through insurance and the city would procure a backup transformer for use in future.

The big issue in White River being water supply, Diamond outlined a plan to improve services to the town, especially those parts that usually suffer first and most. It includes a pipe replacement programme, although it might take years to complete.

Theo Botha, senior manager on water planning, confirmed that the augmentation scheme from Mbombela to White River, with a 450-millimetre bulk water pipeline running from Phumlani Pump Station to White River, nears completion.

Bertha Seloane, senior manager for water operations, said the quality of potable water had been improved and quality

assurance tests will be performed regularly. Funding for further upgrades on a new 450-millimetre sewer outfall to alleviate the pressure on the existing plant, was also allocated.

He advised residents to escalate persistent issues to his office and encouraged them to join the White River Ratepayers Association (WRRRA).

The WRRRA used the opportunity to hand over a memorandum of grievances that included concerns about the proposed development of a cultural hub at a huge

cost as well as several other issues like the provision of public toilets, inadequate infrastructure for schooling and health, the planting of trees where age has caught up with the old ones, inadequate water

and sewerage infrastructure, pipe failures and poor water and wastewater treatment, with reticulated water of poor quality and intermittent supply.

Communications for issuing of notices, interruption of services and so on should not be primarily via social media, which is not recognised as a legal notification. It should be posted in local newspapers and placed before the event.

Council buildings in White River are in a shocking state and assets are not properly controlled. The council gardens are

neglected and overgrown.

Numerous dangerous manholes lack covers and despite many personnel on the roadsides, ostensibly to collect litter, little effort is expended. More functional litter bins are needed too.

Vagrants are sleeping all over town and heavy trucks ignoring the 16-ton limit are parking in town while traffic to and from Hazyview are using Impala and Kiaat streets. Illegal mechanics operating in Tom Lawrence Street dump engine oil, discarded parts and other garbage in the street gutter or in the stream.

Ward 30 residents want to have a representative for oversight of tender awards since tenders for services and public works have been awarded to inadequately experienced or incompetent people in the past.

There is no provision for receipt and storage of domestic level hazardous waste and there appears to be a duplication of responsibility for street level garbage collection. Municipal vehicles and private contractor's vehicles are collecting. Illegal dumping persists.

Crime is escalating and prevention needs to be addressed, and complaints about noisy and unseemly behaviour by non-residents at the municipal swimming pool is emphasised.

The local fire station's building and equipment are not legally compliant and should be upgraded urgently.