

**ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE MAYOR, TUESDAY, 31 MAY 2011:  
SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE ELECTED EXECUTIVE MAYOR:**

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Mr Speaker, fellow councillors, Municipal Manager, Directors, other managers and personnel, members of the press, ladies and gentlemen.

DA Swartland

I am proud of the fact that the DA in the Swartland had a very clean election campaign and that we were not involved in any accusations or slander with the other parties.

Many thanks to all DA candidates and fellow DA workers.

This enabled us to obtain the highest DA percentage vote in South Africa. Swartland DA has grown from 58.23% DA votes in 2006 to 64.24% DA votes in 2011.

This gives the DA a very strong mandate in the Swartland to continue with the management of the best municipality in South Africa – Swartland.

The closest was the Cape Metro with 60.92 % DA votes, and I wish to congratulate them and all the other DA managed municipalities on their success.

In the Western Cape the DA manages 17 municipalities outright and 5 in a coalition, the ANC manages only 1 and 7 in a coalition.

Mr Speaker

I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate all the Councillors on their election to the Council of the best Municipality in South Africa, congratulations.

Also my congratulations to you as Speaker and the second woman in my life, who has again been elected as Deputy Mayor, Councillor Maude Goliath.

I trust that you will once again bring the necessary skills to this position during this term of office.

It is a great privilege to me to once again serve the Swartland and its residents during this term as Executive Mayor, a position with great challenges.

It is just more than 2 years ago that I was elected as Executive Mayor, and let me give you the assurance that together with my Executive Mayor's Committee, Municipal Manager and the complete Management Team, I will do all in my power to carry out the task, that has been entrusted to me, with great circumspection and responsibility, in terms of the MFMA.

Each one of us as Councillors is the elected representative of the Swartland community, and we embrace this responsibility with dedication and humility.

I am however sad to note that the ANC does not elect it's Council Representatives with more discretion.

It is not healthy to nominate a Councillor whose spouse has an important executive position in this Municipality.

I earnestly request the ANC to be careful in electing representatives to the various committees and that the relevant Councillor is not elected to committees where her husband is the responsible Director.

The election is a thing of the past and we as Councillors are here to serve the community without asking who voted for which party.

With the support of the Executive Mayor's Committee, Councillors, the Municipal Manager and his Management Team I am certain that the Swartland Municipality will continue to grow as one of the most successful municipalities within the West Coast District, the Western Cape and South Africa.

Mr Speaker, before I address some successes and goals, I wish to thank the outgoing councillors for the role that they played in building the Swartland.

Allow me once again the opportunity to thank our personnel for their loyalty to the Municipality.

Without you we would not have reached our goal.

In the past 5 years the Swartland has achieved the following successes:

- In 2006 in the Provincial VUNA award we won two of the five categories and at National level we won the Local Economic Development award.
- In 2007 we won the full Vuna Award for both the Western Cape and at National level.
- In 2007 & 2008 we also won the Cleanest Town Competition, both Provincial and National.

- In 2010 we participated in an independent survey (Municipal IQ) with respect to service delivery and in this instance Swartland achieved 6th place out of 222 "B" municipalities.
- In December 2010 the Western Cape Provincial Government brought out a special government gazette in which the performance of all the Western Cape municipalities was judged in the same way as VUNA.  
Swartland was listed no. 1 out of the Western Cape "B" municipalities.  
This is indeed an achievement and Swartland gained 2.6 out of a possible 3 points. There is therefore still room for improvement.
- Between 2006 and 2010 Swartland achieved unqualified audits every year from the Auditor General.

In the last ten years Swartland has built 4200 low cost houses for an amount of R156 million. This includes all bulk services and extra costs, such as the tarring of roads and fencing each property.

- In the Darling low cost housing scheme Province, together with assistance from the Danish Government, provided 540 houses with solar panel heating at no charge.  
We would also like to thank the MEC for Local Government and former Mayor of the Swartland, mr Anton Bredell for his assistance.
- Serviced plots in Moorreesburg (Sibanye) 93 and in Phola Park 254 were developed at a cost of more than R5,6 million and successfully transferred to families previously living in squatter camps.
- In Chatsworth it is distressing to note that a group of residents are trying to delay the housing project. I earnestly and urgently request that we can move these people, living under dreadful conditions, into new houses and in so doing lift them out of the spiral of poverty.
- The following low cost housing projects will be built in the following order of priority - Abbotsdale (325) and Riebeek West (320).

This Council has already made the decision that, as soon as the above mentioned housing projects are completed, low cost houses will only be built in Moorreesburg, Darling and Malmesbury, because adequate services such as water, electricity and sewerage are only available in these towns.

#### Lack of service delivery

Mr Speaker, at national level there is anxiety over municipalities' inability to deliver services.

In addition municipalities are also accused of not being persons/client orientated.

A general complaint is that municipalities are self-centred instead of being community orientated. People complain inter alia about

- councillors, who after five years, are no longer in touch with voters.
- political appointments;
- corruption.

We have already demonstrated over the past 10 years that we are not guilty of this.

I will once again pledge that the Council, will not become guilty of this.

I can also state, with humility and pride, that Swartland will, in all probability, continue to delight the National Government by being one of the best municipalities in the country with respect to delivery of services to the entire community, but I am still aware that much more can still be done.

We must never forget our role, namely to deliver sustainable and affordable services to all our residents.

#### It can also be asked why several of these problems arise in many municipalities?

Some of the reasons include the following:

- the high expectations of the community (possibly too high for the amount of money available);
- increase in outstanding debt (because some Councillors and the public do not encourage the community to pay for their services);
- new legislation which must be implemented annually;
- complex legal framework within which Municipalities must operate;

- lack of development orientated focus (which should create the climate for local economic development so that the private sector can develop and create the badly needed employment opportunities);

Mr Speaker, I must also include the following risks with which the municipalities have to contend:

- political instability (weak and/or ignorant Councillors, management and personnel);
- financial sustainability (the building of low cost housing is not sustainable and we must make more effort to provide GAP housing to the section of the community who CAN afford to pay for their services);
- provision of services (which is affordable, sustainable and includes replacement of ageing infrastructure);
- immigration (the steady influx of people places an unaffordable burden on municipalities);
- “Un-funded mandates” or “Under-funded mandates” (such as libraries, Thusong centres, licenses, road worthiness etc.).

## THE CHALLENGES

### (1) Human resources development

The development of human resources at local government level is twofold:

- (a) councillors and officials; and
- (b) the community with focus on the poorest sector.

With respect to in-house development, councillors and officials must be schooled in the legal requirements for good governance and the art of strategic thinking and planning.

This strategic planning must have a strong development focus.

We must think creatively as a team in order to attract investors such as industries and businesses to the Swartland.

In addition, using our multipurpose centres, we must develop the abilities of the community to help them out of the cycle of poverty.

The poorest sector of the community must thereby be empowered.

### (2) Political leadership

Healthy local government depends on the quality of political leaders.

*We were elected to make a difference, not to make excuses.  
Or, in the words of Robert Kennedy, recently quoted by President Obama:  
“The future is not a gift. It is an achievement.”*

We must ensure that:

- Swartland Municipality is community orientated;
- Appointment of personnel is according to merit and not for political reasons;
- Tenders called for by the municipality must benefit the Swartland community by creating job opportunities;
- The Swartland Municipality governs in a clean, goal orientated, effective and corruption free manner;  
Corruption is stealing from the poor, stealing from those who are most dependent on help from the government;
- We maintain the municipal infrastructure and where necessary create new infrastructure which is necessary for healthy growth and growth in job opportunities;
- We must not stand in the way of people wanting to start businesses or grow existing businesses;
- We must adopt an attitude of adaptation to modern society and change citizens experience of “red-tape” to “red-carpet”.

That we as parties in the Council have differences of opinion and that matters are then debated is usually a good thing.

It indicates that our democracy is strong and healthy, and that there is room for differences and conflict.

It is however necessary to ensure that debate in this Council focuses on alternative solutions.

We cannot share a future if we are caught up in the conflicts of the past. Naturally the legacy of the past is still with us and will be with us for years to come. Swartland is however committed to repair of the legacy in the shortest possible time and in the most sustainable manner. Let's embrace each other's trust. Let's make matters count, and play the ball and not the man, to the benefit of the Swartland community.

The Swartland would not be one of the best Municipalities in the Western Cape and South Africa if it were not for our dedicated personnel under the management of a dedicated management team and a dedicated municipal manager. Without them we would also be just a municipality where money is wasted, corruption is rampant and service delivery is poor.

I would also like to thank the personnel who reach out to the community in their own free time, amongst others the following:

- Just before Christmas 2010 a "chomp-project" was rolled out for our children;
- In April this year the Council decided to start the "Wonderbag" project. The personnel grabbed the opportunity, and after-hours on a voluntary basis, distributed "Wonderbags" to about 5000 destitute households to use for cooking their food, thus saving on electricity and fuel.

On behalf of the Swartland community many thanks for your unselfish service to the community.

*Clean government is essential, but it is not enough.  
Government must also spend taxpayers' money effectively, and make a measurable difference to peoples' lives.  
And Swartland does exactly that!*

Mr Speaker, there will not be any 100 day plan.

Swartland's previous Council drew up and approved a 10-year plan, in which there is a strong focus on service delivery, wiping out the backlog, maintenance of infrastructure and/or replacement thereof. The community has once again given us an overwhelming mandate to continue on the path already embarked on by the Swartland Municipality.

#### **Councillors, Officials and the Public:**

One of the greatest challenges in South Africa is bad sewerage works and the resulting pollution of the environment. Faulty sewerage works will severely limit future growth in many municipalities and therefore Swartland Municipality has budgeted more than R182 million over the next 5 years for the replacement and expansion of sewerage plants.

- By upgrading of the Malmesbury sewerage plant with a membrane system we are ensuring the optimal use of the property. Whereas with the old technology we could treat sewerage for a maximum of 100 000 residents, with the new membrane technology on the same premises we can treat sewerage from more than 250 000 residents.

It can be stated with conviction that switching over to the latest sewerage treatment technology we are leaving a legacy for the future, just as our forefathers, who built the Paardeberg Dam in 1920, left for us.

- The building and successful commissioning of the Dahlia Care Centre is part of the development and protection of the youth.
- Our Thusong centres assist our community and the youth by providing a "one-stop-shop" of services and already helps more than 1000 people per month. During the next few years we will make a great effort to build and operate further Thusong centres in Saamstaan, Kalbaskraal and Chatsworth/Riverlands.

- Of the approximately 24 000 households in the Swartland more than 4500 households (20%) receive subsidised or free services. These destitute households receive the following free every month under certain conditions:  
(Besides the free 6 kiloliter water which each household receives, destitute households get an extra 4 kiloliter water), 50 Kwh electricity, weekly refuse removal, flush sanitation or sewerage pumping and a discount of R 100 000.00 on property valuation on which rates and taxes are calculated. This does not however mean that the free 10 kiloliters of water should be wasted.

I once again implore all residents to please use water sparingly.

- The Council will also continue to provide free plumbing services to destitute households in an attempt to limit water wastage from leaking toilets, water pipes and taps and in so doing keep the outstanding debt of these households under control.
- Mr Speaker, the building of storm water drainage systems and the building of roads in certain areas is one of this Council's priorities and during the next 10 years more than R60 million will be spent on ensuring these residents a more acceptable and humanitarian existence. In addition the savings on vehicles (as a result of bad roads) and possible doctor's fees (as a result of dust related illnesses) will be a big advantage to this sector of the community.

In towns such as Kalbaskraal, Abbotsdale, Darling, Riebeek West and Riebeek Kasteel more than R11 million will have been spent before the end of this financial year (30 June 2011) on solving storm water problems and providing roads with a tarred surface.

- Resealing of roads is also a very important part of maintenance.  
In the next 10 years Swartland will spend more than R73 million on resealing.  
The roads identified are prioritised according to a technical programme without interference from Councillors.
- With the ageing water storage facilities and old networks we will need to spend a great deal of money in the next 10 years to maintain these and have in fact budgeted more than R5 million over the next 5 years for this purpose.  
The replacement of certain parts of the network will be determined by the number of water pipe breaks, as indicated in the municipality's incident programme.  
We also need to urgently investigate whether the drop in water pressure at certain times can result in a reduction of water pipe breakage's and/or water loss.
- Swartland Swartland Municipality operates one of the most successful dump sites in South Africa, near Abbotsdale.  
The site will serve the needs of the Swartland for about the next 30 years.  
For the next few years we are helping Bergrivier by allowing them access to our dump.  
In the previous year we began a huge campaign by erecting notice boards with our Swartland "litterbug".  
"Igloos" for the recycling of glass, paper, plastic and tins were erected in all the towns.  
This has been done in order to encourage Swartland residents to recycle and I implore the community to make use of the "igloo" facilities and by doing so to contribute to the well known slogan "REDUCE" - "RE-USE" - "RECYCLE".
- It is however very disappointing that the prize money of R2 million for winning the national cleanest town competition in 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 has not yet been received.
- In the past 10 years almost R20,5 million has been spent on upgrading the Eskom supply and R26,6 on upgrading our own networks.
- In the next 5 years more than R59 million will be spent on upgrading our own electricity networks as well as a further R8,7 million for extending networks for new developments.  
Swartland has sent requests to NERSA to take over the electricity network in towns where electricity is supplied by ESKOM.
- Swartland Council has already unilaterally decided that an annual increase of more than 12% in ESKOM electricity tariffs is not affordable to the Swartland community and letters to this effect have been written to NERSA, but no notice was taken of them.

Mr Speaker, it is this kind of practise which incites the community to revolt against excessive tariff increases.

It can also be said with feeling that, "You do not understand" which has been clearly spelt out in letters to NERSA.

- In the past 10 years more than R100 million has been spent in ward 7, of which in Chatsworth alone R63 million was spent.  
The problem is that backlogs in these areas are huge and therefore the most money is spent on providing services which are underground such as water, storm water, sewerage and much more. The community then thinks that nothing has been done to upgrade their area but this is not true. Before you can provide visible improvements you must first have all the invisible services in place.
- The youth is very important in the Swartland and the Junior Town Council will be strongly supported over the next 5 years.
- Sondeza Youth Camp, which has already been held 7 times and where in December 2010, 90 learners from the schools in surrounding municipalities, as well as learners from England and Germany received training in leadership skills will also be strongly supported over the next 5 years. Swartland is one of the few municipalities in South Africa making strides in the development and leadership of our youth.  
The youth of today are the adults (leaders) of tomorrow who will decide in which old age home we will spend our declining years.
- The establishment and operation of ward committees is a large feather in Swartland's cap and the ward committee's constitution is being used by the relevant national department to get the ward committees in the rest of the country up and running.  
I ask the new Council to tackle this function with the necessary diligence and responsibility.
- Communication problems with which most municipalities struggle can primarily be addressed by ward committees which function correctly. It is important that the ward councillor works together with the municipal manager and the management team in order to make the system function.
- A huge responsibility rests on every councillor to ensure that the compilation of his ward committee is **transparent, participative and inclusive**. As Council and management team we must use the ward committees to keep the public informed about municipal matters.  
An informed community is a happy community.
- As the only non-metro municipality Swartland has a very successful Municipal Police Service which is highly regarded in the rest of the country.
- A very real threat to growth is crime, especially violent crime. Crime does not only mean that no one wants to invest in your area, but also violates people's right to live without threat.  
We must do everything in our power and within our limited resources and legal mandate to increase the safety of the citizens of the Swartland and in so doing to ensure good living conditions.
- We are at present in the process of reconstituting the SMPS in order to carry out such tasks as Traffic Control, Crime Prevention and Policing of municipal by-laws more efficiently.  
In this realignment of the SMPS it is not envisaged that any posts will be lost.
- In a discussion with the MEC of Sport, Swartland requested that the Moorreesburg sports grounds, because of their suitability and central position, are made the athletics home for all the 5 municipalities making up the West Coast District area.  
Swartland Municipality also supports the development of a Tartan athletic track in Moorreesburg and has already made requests for funding to various bodies.
- During the same visit to the minister a request was made to make Malmesbury, with its Olympic standard swimming pool, to be the swimming home for the same 5 municipalities in the West Coast District area. The building of an Astroturf hockey field was also discussed.
- Requests for funding for heated swimming facilities and an Astroturf hockey field have also been made to various bodies.

The position of Executive Mayor, together with the Mayor's Committee, is a great challenge to me.

In order to implement my plans the above mentioned processes must be put in place as soon as possible in order to deliver sustainable services.

We will also undertake the following:

- The mayor's committee will meet on a regular basis, so that decisions can be taken as quickly as possible.  
These meetings are however not held behind closed doors and therefore promote democracy in a transparent manner.  
It also means that we, the Council, will not always be able take popular decisions.  
We, as leaders, must sometimes be prepared to take unpopular decisions.
- That no official inauguration will take place, but that the money available for this purpose is rather used to the benefit of the community.
- The performance management system is in place and I wish to thank the management team for their participation in the system without drawing financial gain.
- Swartland Municipality set up a performance management system for Councillors on 1 July 2010 and is one of the first municipalities to implement such a system.  
You, as Councillors, must be prepared for the first evaluations.  
Performance contracts between full time Councillors and the Executive Mayor will be concluded over and above the performance contracts with senior personnel.
- Mr Speaker, Councillors, the above are some of the most important subjects that Swartland Council presents to the Swartland community for the future. I cannot do this alone, and I rely on the co-operation of Council, the Municipal Manager and his team and believe that we as one can achieve our vision for the Swartland, namely -

*That local government in the Swartland WILL work over time, because we are building sustainable partnerships with ALL our people. We are going to play a key role in delivering democracy and development.*

**May the Almighty Father bless us with prosperity, health and peace.**

*Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika. God bless Africa. God bless you all.*

I thank you.  
Alderman Tijmen van Essen  
31 May 2011