

AUGUST 2009

Client service: Service standards shortly available to public

SM appointed *Ekko Marketing and People Development* in January this year as a specialist consultant to develop a client-service charter for the municipality.

Much work was done on this during the first two quarters of the year.

Focus-group interviews were conducted both with selected taxpayers in all the areas serviced by **SM** as well as with our own staff.

We also conducted a series of workshops with our staff to discuss the results and, more importantly, to decide on service standards that are supported by our computer system.

And now **SM** has a unique service model that will form the basis for all future actions in respect of service delivery and that will form part of our client-service charter. This charter will be tangible proof and will be definitive of the municipality's dedication to the delivery of outstanding service to our clients, you, the taxpayers.

We are very happy with the course of the process thus far and we should be able to

make our client-service charter available first to our staff and then to our taxpayers within the next few months.

The process is continuing in order for our client-service charter to be finalised into a document that will help everyone (both taxpayers and staff) in **SM** to make our towns even better places in which to live and to work.

We are currently adjusting our computer system to enable our staff to manage enquiries and complaints faster. This will also enable management to keep track of outstanding work more easily to ensure that all tasks are executed in good time and to the satisfaction of our clients.

Those staff members who work with the public will be undertaking specific training in client service. This training will help to make them aware of the unique needs of our clients and to equip them with skills to bring service delivery in line with our service standards.

We are planning to adapt our website over the long term. And we are planning to adapt the way in which we communicate

with all our stakeholders, too.

We are very excited about improving our service delivery to you even more. We will keep you posted about our progress. But, in the meantime: you can expect a copy of our client-service charter shortly!

Until next time, we would like to share the following thought with you: **Remember: Excellence in client service does not mean that we are doing something that no one else is doing; it simply means that we are doing what everyone else should be doing but is not doing!**

– Joggie Scholtz
Municipal Manager

LOTTO funding obtained for certain sports projects

SM has recently learned that an amount of R3 million has been allocated to the municipality from the national lottery fund for the following sports facilities:

- Ilinge Lethu, Malmesbury: R1 million: one soccer field, mobile pavilions and lights for A field
- Wesbank, Malmesbury: R1 million: The draining of A field, the upgrading of the floodlights and the building of dressing-rooms for C field
- Koringberg: R500 000: Fencing and mobile pavilions
- Abbotsdale: R500 000: The expansion of the dressing-rooms to include a clubhouse

These projects will be completed as the available funds and actual expenditures allow.

Funding for projects amounting to more than R19 million was applied for in the original application for Lotto funds. The projects that were not approved will be included as priorities in the next funding application.

Malmesbury library open again!

After completion of essential structural maintenance work to the floor of Malmesbury's town library, the library opened its doors again to the public on 22 August.

Thank you to all our library users for your patience during this period!

Vandalism at cemeteries

SM deplores the large-scale vandalism that is being committed at cemeteries in its area.

Graves and gravestones are private property and the municipality therefore cannot take responsibility for their maintenance. It can take responsibility only for the maintenance of the paths, roads and common open spaces within the cemeteries.

Please report any incidents of vandalism either to the Swartland Municipal Police or to the South African Police Service.

Planting trees

If you would like to plant trees on sidewalks, please bear the following in mind:

Do not

- plant trees directly underneath lampposts;
- plant trees in such a way that they will obscure road signs within one or two years; and
- plant invasives: their roots can cause problems.

If you would like advice on the planting of trees, feel free to contact Renate du Plessis. She will be able to help you both with your choice of tree and with a suitable place to plant it.

Cutting down trees

SM regularly has to call in the help of the police with people who cut down trees on the municipal common for personal gain or who cut down trees without the necessary permission.

If you would like to cut down any trees, please address a written application to this effect to Marius Skippers, Area Head, Municipal Police. If your application is approved, a permit will be issued to you. People who cut down trees without a permit are guilty of theft and a crime dossier will be opened against them with the South African Police Service.

Observe rules of number-plates!

The annual matric-farewell functions are giving the Municipal Police headaches: learners are using their names for their number-plates.

This practice is illegal. Regulations promulgated in terms of the National Road Traffic Act determine that

- no one may use a motor vehicle on a public road if the appropriate number-plate is not displayed;
- no one may use a motor vehicle on a public road if the number-plate is intended to create the impression that it belongs to the vehicle concerned; the registration number on the plate and on the licence disc must correspond;
- no decorations, designs, letters or numbers may be attached to a number-plate;
- no decorations, designs, letters or numbers may be attached within 150 mm of a number-plate.

No concessions may be made to this law. The fine for an illegal number-plate currently amounts to R500 – and offenders will be prosecuted.

New senior appointments

SM has recently promoted two internal candidates to the following posts:

MADELAINE TERBLANCHE, former Head: Management Services, was appointed Director: Corporate Services from 1 August in the place of Henry Prins, appointed Municipal Manager of the West Coast District Municipality.

MARK GREEN was appointed Head of the Municipal Police Service from 1 July. He was formerly Assistant Head and replaces Rob Young, appointed Head of the Cape Metro Police.

Sewerage blockages: Help us to prevent them

The function of a water-borne sewage distribution network is to transport household wastewater and business and factory wastewater in an underground pipe network to a sewerage plant without exposing the wastewater to the environment. The pipes vary in diameter from 100 mm to 450 mm.

At the sewerage plant, the wastewater is purified and then safely released back into the environment.

Blockages in the sewerage system do, however, occur, with resultant service interruption and pollution and with the accompanying inconvenience and health risks to residents and to the environment.

Sewerage blockages are caused mainly in one of two ways:

1. Tree roots grow into the joins and bends of the pipes and cause blockages in this way. These types of blockages occur less seldom and are also attended to as part of the operation of the sewerage network through, for example, the regular application of chemicals that restrict the growth of roots in the pipes.
2. The more general cause of blockages is the abuse of our sewerage system by some of our residents. The system is designed to transport only specific amounts of water; moreover, it is not designed to transport solids or foreign materials. Some residents link their gutter down-pipes to the sewerage system; during heavy rain, the sewerage system then becomes overloaded with the additional rainwater, which results in blockages. Blockages are also caused when materials such as rags, nappies, tins, bottles, fats and oils are disposed of into manholes and toilets.

Residents can therefore make a huge contribution to preventing blockages to our sewerage system by not disposing of foreign objects and items into our sewerage pipes.

Enquiries: Louis Zikman/Francois Malan

Special projects for our community

SM's community developers invite all Swartlanders to take note of and to link up with the following projects:

- **Attendance of an open day at the various campuses of Northlink College on 4 and 5 September:** Prospective students should have their names short-listed with Demitri Hendricks or Gertrude van der Westhuizen of the Swartland Youth Advisory Centre at 022 486 4593.
- **Registration on the SM database by all schools involved in early childhood development** to participate in training sessions in the Swartland and in forum meetings. Two well-attended training sessions have already been presented. Please phone Clerise du Plessis at 022 433 2246 for more information.
- **Participation in Community Development and Nutrition Centres:** Soup kitchens in each town are encouraged to link up with one another. The aim of the above-mentioned centres, which were launched in August, is not only to provide nutritious meals but also to provide work and training-related information. Please phone Clerise du Plessis at 022 433 2246 for more information.

This year, the **SM** Community Development division is focusing on bringing about better cooperation among organisations, churches and individuals involved in skills development and/or social development. Please phone Marguerite Holtzhausen, Senior Community Developer, for more information.