



## CITY OF CAPE TOWN

### COUNCIL SPEECH BY THE CITY'S EXECUTIVE MAYOR, ALDERMAN DAN PLATO

***Note to editors: The following speech was delivered by the Executive Mayor this morning during a full sitting of Council.***

Mr Speaker, good morning, and good morning to all the councillors, City officials, members of the public, media, and guests. Let me take the opportunity to wish you all a happy, prosperous and safe 2019.

I also want to extend a special thank you to all the firefighters and staff who have been working overtime in recent days and weeks. Your efforts to keep our homes safe and fight raging fires in terrible weather conditions are highly appreciated. I am also very appreciative that our officials kept the media and members of the public informed at all times about the fire.

We have just closed off the festive season and I am very thankful for the hard work put in by our law enforcement officers and the many officials who worked through the holidays to keep our communities safe on the beaches, in our parks and on the roads.

Speaker, when I took up this position in November last year I committed to visiting our communities as part of my listening tour to hear first-hand from our residents what their concerns were. I also visited the City's call centre and spoke to some residents about their enquiries.

I promised in November last year that 2019 would be the year of delivery, so I am very pleased to report that by week five of this year we are already seeing an improvement in service delivery.

Community clean-ups involving our officials, our councillors and community members themselves are well on their way. I joined councillors in Leonsdale, Elsie's River, earlier this month; and next week my office and I will be in Golden Gate and Tafelsig in Mitchells Plain to help keep those communities clean too. I am impressed to see many other councillors take hands with their communities and do more clean-ups.

The City of Cape Town already spends R300 million of its budget on solid waste removal but because of illegal dumping and, at times, a lack of respect for our own surroundings, our efforts are not as effective as they could be.

We need our communities to report the criminals who are making their communities dirty, unsafe, and unsightly. And while our councillors know this number very well, let me remind the public of the contact number now - 021 480 7700. I want everybody in Cape Town to know that number and to use it to report problems in their neighbourhoods.

We have 26 drop-off sites across the city for garden refuse, builders' material and any other items that don't fit into wheelie bins. There really is no excuse for illegal dumping.

Any person found to be dumping illegally will be fined between R5 000 and R15 000; and if they are doing it from a vehicle, we will impound that vehicle too. If they want to get their vehicle back it's going to cost them another R8 400, so go ahead. If you think R23 400 is worth your dumping then we will take your money, put it back into delivering services, and you will still have to clean up your mess and take it to where it should be dumped.

Speaker, I am pleased to share with this house how we are putting the adjustments budget to good use, and addressing some of the issues the public have raised with us.

For example, we are allocating an additional R115 million towards cleaning up our communities.

- R56 million will go towards additional cleaning of informal settlements
- R14 million will be used to recruit EPWP workers who will help us with community clean-ups
- R20 million is allocated for the Area Cleaning division in our Solid Waste Management Department and these services will specifically be for our poorer areas
- and then an extra R25 million is set aside for our Recreation and Parks Department which will go towards grass cutting and maintenance across all wards

People who are dumping and littering illegally should be ashamed. They are not only showing complete disregard for our by-laws, they are making us spend money that could have been spent elsewhere; and, most importantly, they are showing a massive disrespect for their own communities.

It is well established how grime can lead to crime, which is why we have placed such a big focus on cleaning up our communities.

But to complement this, we must deal with the crime too. This was a clear message from our communities during my listening tour, and that is why I have allocated an additional R165 million to our law enforcement services in this year's adjustments budget.

Speaker, before I get into the detail on this one, I just want to point out that, in December last year, the Equality Court, in a damning judgement, found that the SAPS is discriminating against poor people, and in particular black communities, in the allocation of policing resources. It is shameful that the SAPS had to be taken to court for them to hear what we have been saying for so long – this province and this city needs more policing resources. I must applaud the civil society group for taking up this fight on behalf of the affected communities. I will be keeping a close eye on this case as I want to see a remedy being proposed as we cannot go on just talking about SAPS denying this city the policing it deserves.

But back to what we as the City of Cape Town are doing. The additional R165 million that we are allocating to our Safety and Security Directorate is just the start of our efforts to increase safety levels in our communities.

I want to see even more budget allocated to our Law Enforcement service in the next financial year, and the public will get to have their say when we publish our annual budget in March this year.

We are going to start with recruiting an extra 100 officers and 40 new vehicles with this adjustments budget, but I want to see even more officers on our streets over the next two years.

The R165 million for Law Enforcement will go towards recruiting new Law Enforcement staff, new radios and equipment, paying overtime for those officers who help the City to provide a 24/7 service, new vehicles and CCTV cameras, and upgrading our fire stations in the areas most affected by fires. We are also very thankful for additional funding we have received from the Western Cape Government to expand our K9 unit for the City of Cape Town.

The people of Cape Town must feel safe; and, while the South African Police Service (SAPS), remains the primary law enforcement authority and falls under the National Government's operational control, I want to make sure that, as the City of Cape Town, we do everything we can to keep our communities safe.

I want to point out that the destruction of public infrastructure that we provide for our communities contributes towards making our communities unsafe. This city spent R7,6 million on building and delivering a beautiful Smart Park for the Sea Winds community, but less than a year and a half later there is nothing left. It is completely destroyed. We need our communities to please work with us here. This destruction of community facilities cannot be tolerated. Our communities call for services. We deliver services, to the tune of millions of rands, but then people in these communities go and destroy the facilities and the next day people again shout at public meetings for services. Our communities need to help us to protect these facilities. These are after all for the communities, and it is their facilities.

Speaker, I want to appeal to our councillors, the officials who are out on the road, and the public to please report vandalism when you see it.

I would now like to share with you some of the other areas that will be receiving additional funds during the adjustments budget.

I know that the majority of the media here are very capable of reporting accurately on financial matters, and I am thankful for the role you play in keeping the public informed, but unfortunately one or two get it wrong. If you don't understand something, please just ask for assistance. Our officials are always available to clarify anything you might not understand. Reporting inaccurately does damage and it misinforms the public, so we'd like to make sure you have all the right information.

Let's get straight into water – 2018 was a major success for the City and its people in overcoming one of the worst droughts to ever affect this city. Let us just take a

moment to appreciate what we all achieved by working together.

Yes, our intervention resulted in some increased costs, some of which we have already alleviated by dropping water restriction levels back to Level Three, but at the end of the day the taps did not run dry.

Despite what some people try to portray, there is no massive over-recovery on water rates; we have in fact had to subsidise the water and sanitation service from the rates account, and will only know if there has been any over- or under-recovery at the end of the current financial year. While we did see an over-recovery of water income between July and October last year, due to certain residents continuing to use water in the higher steps of the Level 6 tariffs, we have already seen a significant reduction in November and December, after Level 5 tariffs were introduced. With the introduction of Level 3 tariffs as from December, we expect to see an under-recovery for the rest of the financial year and expect to come out close to our original projection for income for the year.

A range of measures, including the City's pressure demand management programme and the massive savings efforts by our residents, ensured that we did not run out of water.

It wasn't easy, but considering the serious crisis that was on our doorstep let's not forget what a great success we actually have here, and that we overcame it together. I want to say thank you very much to all Capetonians.

I do still receive some complaints about very high water accounts though. Please bring it to our attention immediately so we can look into these, and I want our councillors to help address these matters.

Cities from around the world are now visiting us, asking how we did it, and our response is always that we averted the drought by working together with the people and communities across Cape Town.

Some of the other adjustment budget highlights include:

The additional grant allocations of R40 million that we have received from the Western Cape Government, and which are also very much appreciated, and include:

- R6,1 million towards HIV and Aids prevention within the Community Services and Health Directorate;
- An additional R26,7 million towards Human Settlements – the beneficiaries of houses want to know that their properties are secure, so this funding will go towards addressing title deed restoration within the Spatial Planning and Environment Directorate

I believe that these adjustments will go a long way towards helping this City achieve its goals of ensuring a safe, caring, inclusive, well-run, and opportunity-creating city.

Speaker, let us not allow those with divisive motives to speak on our behalf. Let us not allow those who seek to break the unity and inclusivity we all enjoy in this beautiful

city to confuse us. Because make no mistake: there are those in our society who do not want us to succeed, they do not want our people to be united because it serves their purpose to rather have everyone fighting amongst themselves.

But let me end off on a positive note.

Speaker, I know our councillors are committed to ensuring our communities get to enjoy quality services. I want to wish them well for 2019 and remind them that my door remains open if there are problems they are grappling with.

Our philosophy remains that we need our communities to work with us because we cannot do it alone. We need active citizenry. We want our residents to be proud of where they work and live, and we would love to see them continue to play their part too.

Where the public feels we are not holding up our part of the bargain, they must please let us know, and I want to know, because we want to make sure we do whatever we can to keep delivering the best quality services possible.

Thank you.

**End**