

Speech by the Executive Mayor, Alderman Patricia de Lille, at the full Council meeting on 28 August 2013

Good morning, goeie more, molweni.

Mr Speaker,

Cape Town has always had gangs.

The drug trade is a more recent addition to this terrible history but its effect has been as disastrous as it has been dramatic.

This has been especially true in areas like Hanover Park, Lavender Hill and, most recently and dramatically, Manenberg.

We must make no mistake: the criminals who shoot each other and the innocent are individuals who must take responsibility for their actions.

They must be held to account and submitted to the justice system so that they pay for their crimes.

But in as much as we speak of the person, we must also consider the society which has helped make the gang member.

We must look and see what we did to try and give people a better chance in fragmented communities.

Because the person who turns to gangs often has nowhere else to turn.

When there are no choices in your world, we cannot be surprised that people find comfort in the identity that a gang provides.

And it is when they are in too deep with that identity, when they have come to understand death, violence and rape as normal, that we see the terrible consequences writ large on our streets.

We need something better, better for our communities and better for that person in the future faced with the option of whether to join a gang or not.

Making these better conditions requires the efforts of all three spheres of government.

We need to target our intervention in three ways: at the level of the community; at the level of the individual; and at the level of the family.

In doing so, we must take note of the constitutional responsibilities of each level of government.

The criminal justice system, including the police, the prosecution authorities and the courts, is a national government competency.

The Western Cape Government and the City of Cape Town have no powers when it comes to investigating crimes and securing convictions in a court of law.

The provincial government and the city government have the competency to start crime prevention programmes in communities that need to work with the justice system.

Let me tell you what we have done.

We have allocated additional metro officers after a funding agreement with the Western Cape Government.

These high levels of visible policing will remain in place until the end of the year.

We are determined to stop the cycle of violence, first by bringing an end to it with a policing solution.

Secondly, we will work with our social partners and the other levels of government to address the longer term socio-economic issues that need to be tackled.

In this regard, we are expanding our Ceasefire programme, using targeted 'violence interrupters' to stop violence from occurring.

We will also finalise our plans to roll out a Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading programme in Manenberg and Hanover Park.

And, in the affected areas, we have approved a project structure to manage services and facilities to maximise social benefit in the immediate to short-term, including the provision of social workers and anti-drug specialists.

At the level of the individual, we need the partnership of the South African Police Service (SAPS).

Along with the Western Cape Government, we will provide the social services required and as much additional policing as possible.

But we need our partners in the SAPS to help stabilise the area and to use their powers to make arrests and detain people.

And finally, the third intervention must be at the level of the family.

Too often, people look for answers elsewhere.

They ask what the government has done for them or their families.

They will place blame anywhere except on themselves.

We need to come together as communities, in our homes and in our families, and support our children.

Because the best long-term strategy is one where government, the family and the community help create the space in which an individual can find opportunity.

Mr Speaker, in terms of bringing communities together, one that has been waiting for a long time is the community of District 6 – or at least the people and their families of which the community was made up before it was destroyed.

Once a vibrant community, the people who made their lives here were forcibly removed by the Apartheid regime under the notorious Group Areas Act.

I can remember being a little girl sitting on my grandmother's *stoep*.

She lived at number 39 Tennant Street in District 6.

She was forced to move to Lavender Hill because of the Group Areas Act.

Today, when I drive past the address, my happy childhood memories are mixed with the pain I feel because of her forced removal.

The District 6 restitution process has had many challenges.

However, since the national government has invested new funds and energy into the process, we have seen some life in the project.

The District 6 project is one where all three levels of government have committed to working together.

The national government is providing the development and project planning as well as the funding.

The provincial government is assisting with regulatory matters and has invested R65 million in a centre for the community.

The City, as the landowner, is making the land available as the developments become ready to be implemented.

We are also committed to providing the planning and rezoning changes needed to facilitate development.

This is in addition to our commitment to provide bulk services.

I am therefore pleased to announce that I was at the hand-over of houses as part of Phase 2 of the development this past Saturday.

We will continue to do everything we can to support District 6 and all legitimate restitution and land claims projects in the city.

And it is important to understand why redress and restitution are so important.

It is about addressing the wrongs of the past for a better future.

And in building that better future, we have to find ways to bring people together across artificial boundaries.

Where we have the legacy of Apartheid spatial planning, we must grab all of the shared spaces we can to foster a new sense of community.

That is why I am pleased to announce that next month we will recommend to this Council that we no longer make the erven commonly known as the Sea Point Pavilion site available for development.

If approved, the site will remain zoned as Public Open Space.

The Sea Point Pavilion has long been used as a collective space by all communities in Cape Town, across racial, class and cultural distinctions.

As part of our commitment to being a Caring City that considers the views and wishes of all of our residents, I strongly advise Council to keep the space open for the enjoyment of present and future Capetonians.

I hope that we will be able to set an example for creating combined spaces in the future by preserving those that we have in the here and now.

Part of creating shared spaces is the creation of a world-class public transportation network that brings people together and connects them with each other.

We have invested heavily in our MyCiTi network and have ambitious plans to cross the metro in the coming years.

Indeed, the end of this year will see the implementation of an express service between Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain and the CBD.

As part of our commitment to making the network viable over the long-term, we have to ensure that all partners are on board with the process.

That means that we have to bring together taxi owners and associations.

In this regard, the City has just concluded a public participation process in terms of Section 33 of the Municipal Finance Management Act.

This section applies to seeking Council approval for contracts lasting longer than three years.

Before Council today is a consideration of 12-year contracts for Vehicle Operating Companies (VOCs) that have been established by minibus-taxi owners receiving shares in companies that will operate parts of the MyCiTi service.

A major part of the MyCiTi project is industry transition.

This refers to the process where the directly affected taxi owners are given the opportunity to exit the taxi industry and become shareholders in a formal VOC.

The VOC is given a contract to operate parts of the MyCiTi service.

In order to make it worthwhile to the taxi owners, and to reduce their risk of loss of income, the contracts that are offered to the VOC's – to operate the MyCiTi service – needed to be of sufficient length of time.

These contracts will help us continue our exceptional roll-out with all stakeholders on board and thereby help transform this city.

Mr Speaker, I am convinced that our efforts to transform our city by using our five pillars – the Opportunity City; the Safe City; the Caring City; the Inclusive City; and the Well-run City – for redress and reconciliation through excellence in service delivery is seeing results.

As released this week, our Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS) has shown that, among our residents, the perception of how the City delivers services continues to improve.

Indeed, over the last five years, we have seen consecutive increases in our levels of performance.

For the financial year that has just passed, we have seen the average rating of the City increase to its highest level yet.

This includes an increase in our performance in the South-East of the city, specifically in Mitchells Plain and Khayelitsha, where dramatic investment is yielding positive results.

And given our drive to create an economic enabling environment for growth and opportunity, it is especially pleasing to note that our ratings from business have also improved.

We are one of the few governments to ask our residents what they think of our services and it is pleasing to see that we are delivering according to and beyond expectations.

In conclusion, let me say that the City's overall performance is pleasing.

We are doing all we can to improve that performance with all stakeholders.

But we need our partners to match our momentum, whether our partners are in the private sector or in different levels of government.

It is only through common action, and united efforts, that we will deliver on our true potential.

And then we will see the power of government, the community and the family working together to create the kind of city in which any and all individuals can thrive.

Thank you, baie dankie, enkosi.