



Key Service Delivery Priorities for 2003- 2018 Council in Harare

September 2013

- 1. Background-** The elections in Zimbabwe came at a time when residents were experiencing serious social hardships and stable political and economic conditions. The period leading up to the elections was intense, with restrictive timeframes to carry out comprehensive voter education, and raising awareness on how to enhance citizen participation. All the political party stakeholders were convinced that they would make a difference during elections. At the time of the 31 July 2013 elections, the City of Harare had eight ward vacancies, following suspensions and dismissals of the elected councillors by the Minister of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development. The major reason councillors were suspended is that allegations of mismanagement, improper conduct, abuse of authority and corruption were levelled against them. The outgoing Harare City Council was elected into office on 29 March 2008, and was officially dissolved on 29 June 2013, having held its last full council meeting on Thursday 27 June at the council chambers. Forty-six councillors were elected, representing the 46 wards of Harare, with one councillor from the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) with the rest from the Movement for Democratic Change – Tsvangirai (MDC-T), and the Minister of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development Ignatius Chombo appointed 11 special interest councillors in line with Section 4A (1) (b) of the Urban Councils' act (Chapter 29.15) which specify that: *Subject to this Act, every municipal and town council shall consist of—(b) such number of appointed councillors representing special interests, not exceeding one-quarter of the number of elected councillors, as the Minister may fix in respect of the council by statutory instrument, and who shall hold office during the pleasure of the Minister.* By the time the council expired, two councillors Ruth Kavunika (Ward 2) and Christopher Tigere (Ward 11) had died, six others had been dismissed by the Minister, while four others had been dismissed by the MDC-T for alleged acts of corruption and indiscipline in their party. Two of those dismissed by the MDC-T had also been dismissed by Minister Chombo, while the other two remained in council, taking advantage of the loopholes in the Urban Councils Act that gives the Minister the sole responsibility to dismiss or suspend a councillor. In this analysis, the Harare Residents' Trust (HRT) outlines the key areas of focus, reflecting on the 2008- 2013 council, and what to look forward to in the 2013- 2018 council, separately from the Harare Metropolitan Council, and jointly within the Metropolitan Council.
- 2. Water and Sewerage Reticulation-** According to the City of Harare's outgoing Mayor Mr Muchadeyi Masunda, the city requires 1 200 megalitres of water daily for a hub of an estimated 4,5 million people in Harare, Norton, Chitungwiza, Ruwa, Epworth and Inkomo Barracks during winter and 1 400 mega litres during summer. However, due to their challenges, they can only pump around 600 mega litres per day, representing 50 percent of their pumping capacity. They have it on record that 50 percent of treated water pumped is lost along the distribution network due to aging distribution pipes and leakages. Records at Harare Water show that there are between 165 000- 200 000 consumers in their database as at November 2012, and 2, 5 million people live in Harare. Engineer Christopher Magwenzi Zvobgo, the Director of Harare Water told participants to a workshop held last November at Wild Geese Lodge near Hatcliffe that 50 percent of water revenue, estimated at US\$3 million was being spent on

water treatment chemicals due to high levels of pollution. He said their customer base is not fully captured and so needed a system that will technically assist the council in data capture. Harare has eight pump stations including the Dzivaresekwa Pump which is dysfunctional, which were all installed in the early 1950s. These are Warren Control, Avondale, Letombo, Prince Edward, Alexander, Orange Groove, Crowhill, and Dzivaresekwa.

- 3. Road Network-** The road network in Harare's western and eastern suburbs leaves a lot to be desired. The roads and streets within the residential and industrial areas are heavily potholed. The City of Harare previously used funds raised from vehicle licensing to repair roads. But this responsibility was taken over by the Zimbabwe National Road Authority (ZINARA). Disbursements to the City of Harare are haphazard, and are done without following any known system, and the figures are not consistent. It is critical that the new council at Town House has to fully engage with ZINARA and the Ministry of Transport to find a lasting solution to the problems of poor road maintenance, rehabilitation and expansion. Where necessary some of the roads in the communities need to be resurfaced to replace the remnants of tar. From the time the national road authority disbursed funds to the City of Harare, the trend has been that of declining incomes from that side, increasing the pressure on the council's rates account of council. This year ZINARA donated a pothole filling machine, Jet Patcher worth US\$550 000. ZINARA has disbursed US\$2, 050, 000 (2012), US\$4, 042, 000 (2010) and US\$654 337 in 2009. It is critical to note that the City of Harare used to generate around US\$5 million in vehicle licensing, which claimed to use for road maintenance and rehabilitation. And at the time, the vehicle population was lower than the current trends where vehicular popular has far exceeded the carrying capacity of the central business district, resulting in over-congestion and chaos. Rates are being used to deal with lights.
- 4. Street Lighting-** Most streets in the high density suburbs have no lights, putting the lives of residents at high risk, particularly children and women who have to carry out economic activities like vending at the local community shops. This is an area that was not attended to during the tenure of the last council. The security of citizens within their neighbourhoods is seriously compromised as thieves, robbers and rapists take advantage of the dark to commit crimes that are preventable. The City of Harare is billed for all street lights by the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA)but whenever they default in payment, ZESA disconnects Town House and Cleveland Building as measures to coerce the local authority to pay up. Presently, reports indicate that the local authority owes the power utility around US\$40 million. This covers street lighting, buildings, including the hostels in Mbare, water pump stations, and stadia. According to council officials, tenants in Mbare hostels, who have bulk metres registered in the name of City of Harare, used to pay for their electricity through rentals but for unclear reasons, they stopped making payments to the City of Harare. This has deprived the local authority of the much-needed revenue. So for owing the power utility, the blocks of flats are not disconnected, but Town House is punished. This relationship and arrangement on electricity costing by the power utility has to be revisited. It is estimated that Mbare hostels owe ZESA around US\$6 million.
- 5. Law Enforcement in Town Planning-** City by-laws, regulations and the sections of the Urban Councils' Act and the Regional, Town and Country Planning Act (Chapter 29.12) have not been strictly enforced and or adhered to, creating a monitoring gap that promotes high incidences of corruption and pilfering of council resources, benefiting few council employees. Housing extensions, transport congestion in the central business district, vending activities, plan approvals and monitoring of health regulations are key activities that have gone unregulated, allowing for illegality to settle in within the systems of council.

The absence of a consistent monitoring system to regulate the activities within residential, industrial, market places, and in the central business district presents serious challenges for any potential investor. Policymakers have a huge task to ensure that the systems of council are upgraded or adequately implemented.

- 6. Waste Management and Health Delivery-** The collection of refuse in residential areas remains inconsistent. The situation was deplorable without any refuse collection when the 2008- 2013 council came into office. However, towards the end of 2012, the council secured a loan to purchase 27 refuse compactors, building on the 20 refuse compactors that were bought in 2010. This ensures that each of the 46 wards is serviced by a refuse collection truck. Heaps of uncollected garbage remains visible at shopping centre and at street corners. The major challenge being given by waste management officials is the erratic supply of fuel to service the residents. Where the council passes a week or two without refuse collection, residents have no obligation to pay for a service not received. The HRT sees this as a relapse to the situation of the past when council's operations were affected by general neglect of responsibilities by key officials, and a poor monitoring system to ensure strict adherence to refuse collection schedules. But of note is the level of positive engagement between the waste management department and the residents, where joint clean up campaigns have been undertaken. Most of the garbage collected is dumped at the Pomona dumpsite near Hatcliffe, requiring all the vehicles to have a fuel allocation of at least 100 litres a week.
- 7. Representation by Elected Councillors-** Councillors are elected in terms of the Electoral Act and their work is guided by the provisions of the Urban Councils' Act, the Regional, Town and Country Planning Act and other pieces of legislation like the Public Health Act, Public Finance Management Act, and the Environment Management Act among others. A key expectation of residents is that councillors must play representative and policymaking roles, acting on residents' behalf. What remain unclear are the legal roles of councillors. Nothing is specified in the Urban Councils' Act, leaving this role to be defined and regulated by bureaucrats at Town House, who manipulate these processes to ensure they totally control the policymaking function and exclusively implement council policies and programmes. Upon assumption of office by the 2008- 2013 council, the majority if not all the elected councillors were ignorant of their mandate. Instead of playing their policymaking role, they ended up behaving more like employees of the council. Their thrust was wealth accumulation and pursuing a partisan agenda, and being confrontational with city employees perceived to be Zanu PF. This attitude led to stalled progress in terms of building a team to take Harare forward. The calibre of the majority of the elected councillors left a lot to be desired as they lacked a basic appreciation of the different roles played by various people in council, and therefore viewed everything through partisan political lenses. As a result they adopted a hostile and negative attitude towards the Minister of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development, whose reading and appreciation of the local government legislation is unmatched by the councillors. Going forward, these key elements have to be tackled in a sober and progressive manner. This led to these councillors being either suspended or dismissed. Only 19 of the councillors from the previous council were retained by the electorate, vindicating the HRT's position that the majority of the councillors were highly incompetent and failed to play their roles to the satisfaction of the electorate. But the assessment is inadequate without mentioning the diversionary and disruptive role of the senior management of council who were accused of interfering in the policymaking functions of councillors by not making available crucial information when decisions were made at committee and full council levels. This resulted in some resolutions being made, against budgetary provisions.

8. Expectations from 2013- 2018 Council of Harare

8.1. Legal Context- Under Chapter 14 of the new Constitution of Zimbabwe, local government is now constitutionalised. There is now Harare Metropolitan Council, which brings together Chitungwiza Municipality, the Ruwa and Epworth Local Boards, and the Harare City Council. The Members of Parliament in all these areas shall be members of the Harare Metropolitan Council, including all senators and the chairperson and the deputy chairpersons of the local board, including the deputy mayors of Chitungwiza and Harare. The Mayor of Harare shall be the Chairperson of the Harare Metropolitan Council while the Mayor of Chitungwiza, being the second largest urban local authority in the Metropolitan Province is the Deputy Chairperson of the Metropolitan Council. What this means is that while the Harare City Council shall be held accountable by the residents for its actions, it is the role of the Harare City Council, in particular of the Mayor, as the Chairperson of the Metropolitan Council that will guarantee success or failure at the local level. The Chairperson of the Metropolitan Council is expected to balance political interests, fuse humour and seriousness in conducting the Metropolitan's business, careful always not to step on toes of political interest groups. The know-it-all attitude displayed by the last council should be avoided at all costs. The citizens must feel honoured and a part of the key processes in the council. At the local council level, the chairing of proceedings shall be easier than at the Metropolitan Council level where political heavyweights in both Zanu PF and the MDC-T shall flex their muscles in a bid to outwit the other. The level headedness of the MPs, Senators, and the Mayors/ Chairpersons and their deputies shall determine the level of progress to be made. But the projection is that both Zanu PF and the MDC-T will maintain their party positions when making key decisions. None will want to give credit where it is due. In terms of the Constitution, Metropolitan Councils have the following key functions;

- Planning and implementing social and economic development activities in its province;
- Co-ordinating and implementing governmental programmes in its province;
- Planning and implementing measures for the conservation, improvement and management of natural resources in its province;
- Promoting tourism in its province, and developing facilities for that purpose;
- Monitoring and evaluating the use of resources in its province; and
- Members of the metropolitan council are accountable, collectively and individually, to residents of their province and the national government for the exercise of their functions.

8.2. Recommendations on Service Delivery

The major expectations of the Harare Residents' Trust (HRT) from the incoming council sworn into office on Monday 16 September 2013 are as follows in order of their priority;

- 8.2.1. Water delivery and sewerage reticulation- this includes the upgrading of the existing infrastructure to match the growing population, plug all leakages along the water distribution network, and attends to all reports brought in by the residents across the communities, maintenance of the water and sewerage infrastructure. The loan agreement entered between the City of Harare and the Chinese Eximbank should be made public for the benefit of every stakeholder who contributes to the funding of the city's operations. As long as this loan agreement is meant for Harare residents, the residents must know in full, and the councillors must make it part of their responsibility to demand accountability and transparency.
- 8.2.2. Citizen participation and involvement in the development of key programmes and policy formulation by the local authority. This is a principle acknowledged in the Constitution of Zimbabwe as highlighted earlier. Budget formulation is one such programme that should increase the working relationship of all stakeholders.
- 8.2.3. Ending corruption in council's tendering and other such important departments, for example, housing delivery, recruitment of casual labourers- grass cutters and diggers, and in the water department.

- 8.2.4. The major source of conflict between the City of Harare and residents of Harare is the top heavy organisational structure of the local authority. The following are the departments of the council- Chamber Secretary, City Health- Administration, City Health- Health Services, Engineering, Harare Water, Amenities, Business, Treasury, Housing and Community Services, Urban Planning Services and the Public Safety Department. Senior managers in grades 1- 4 reportedly gobble plus 70 percent of council's revenue and only 30 percent goes to employees in Grades 5- 16. The council's directors reportedly earn around US\$18 500 for the Town Clerk while the other directors earn around US\$15 000 every month yet the lowest paid in council gets a net salary of US\$157. When the Minister appointed the commission of Tendai Mahachi and Alfred Tome when council was dissolved, he was specific that they were not to recruit people. Unfortunately the council recruited a herald reporter and a Zimbabwe broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) reporter and assigned them senior positions in the public relations department, plus they recruited the director of Public Safety Department and Business Development Director. While these might be necessary, they have to be done in a transparent manner with the capacity of residents to pay them in mind. Any other consideration should be rejected.
- 8.2.5. The council's creativity in revenue generation is dead. Most of the officials indicate that there are no new sources of revenue from which to cushion the suffering residents and improve service delivery. The City of Harare mainly generates revenue from rates, water, refuse collection, sewage, rentals, licenses, towing, and property tax. The alternative is to closely evaluate the revenues being generated through office rentals in the CBD, where very little money is finding its way to city revenue, and instead benefit individuals. The City of Harare should intensify monthly blitzes against business operators who are making revenue out of council's poor debt management policy and monitoring of operations.
- 8.2.6. Implementation of council's decisions and resolutions- The main weakness observed and recorded during the 2008- 2013 council was the apparent shortcomings of the Town Clerk Dr Tendai Mahachi, who seems to be overwhelmed by his responsibilities at Town House. In separate interviews with people in the council system, the Town Clerk is viewed and considered as an individual who is insecure in his job, and is inflexible when it comes to decision-making. They report he is rigid when he has made up his mind on any issue concerning the implementation of council programmes. Reports indicate that since June 2013, the Town Clerk's relationship with three identified directors has deteriorated to levels of hatred, something not expected from the implementers of council resolutions and programmes. Residents expect unity of purpose among the core team of decision makers at Town House. The targeted directors have reportedly stood firm against alleged abuse of funds from their respective departments, weakening their departments in the process. The conflict with these directors is believed to be informed by their demands for accountability in the utilisation of funds generated from their departments, as it emerged that Dr Mahachi is seemingly determined to entrench his authority and control of Town House. If this is true that he threatens and humiliates his directors, then Harare City Council is in serious trouble. The Harare City Council has to launch investigations into the conduct of the Town Clerk and further put in place measures to regulate his behaviour towards his subordinates, and help create a conducive environment for the professional discharge of a public mandate. This works negatively for the achievement of council's mission and goals. Key decisions and resolutions made in council's committees and full council should be fully implemented. But this must be informed by a competent team that gives technical advice that links all aspects of the council's work.
- 8.2.7. Representation by elected councillors has to be strengthened. The electorate has a right to access their elected representatives, irrespective of which party one belongs to. Once they assume office, the councillors have to assume the fatherly and motherly roles expected of them by society. There is no need to dwell on narrow partisan positions, but they have to outgrow their political party beliefs and work in the best interests of all stakeholders, something that can be achieved if they fully engage and involve citizens. Compromises are the hallmark of a functional democracy and officials, residents, councillors and other key stakeholders have to

make provision for compromise in their deliberations, and weigh options before implementation.

- 8.2.8. Developing a detailed template for joint monitoring and evaluation of councillors and officials so that there is increased accountability and transparency in the utilisation of public resources. To achieve this, there must be a clear distinction between the roles and responsibilities of councillors and officials of council. In the past there was chaos at Town House as most councillors wanted to act like they were council employees.
- 8.2.9. The billing system of the City of Harare is chaotic, resulting in most residents failing to clear any of their debts. This is tied in with how the interest charged on overdue accounts are implemented or enforced by the City Treasury Department. The BIQ system must be removed and replaced by a better system that is solid and not as open to manipulation as the BIQ, developed by a Mr Danny from South Africa.
- 8.2.10. Capacity building of councillors has to be prioritised to ensure they appreciate what they are supposed to do in line with the Constitution and the Acts of Parliament that deal with local government.
- 8.2.11. The due dates for payment of bills should be revisited and restore the 7th of every month instead of the new last day of the month as the due date. Most people have been unable to pay their bills on time, and when they delay interest charges have been introduced.
- 8.2.12. Sourcing of funding for council operations, especially capital projects have to be done in a transparent manner that promotes accountability. Residents of Harare are unaware of how much interest will be charged on the US\$144 million loan from the Chinese Eximbank, neither have residents been given an opportunity to view the documents relating to the loan deal. The council should be accountable.

8.3. Key Performance Indicators to Watch

- 8.3.1. The frequency of refuse collection in the communities.
- 8.3.2. The percentage allocation of revenue at 60-70 percent towards service delivery against 30- 40 percent towards salaries and administration.
- 8.3.3. The number of households accessing municipal water, in particular in the eastern and northern suburbs.
- 8.3.4. The percentage of residents' involvement in the affairs of council, especially setting project and programme priorities, and budget formulation.
- 8.3.5. Quality and quantity of feedback meetings convened by elected councillors.
- 8.3.6. The percentage of revenue generated monthly against the assets of council
- 8.3.7. The percentage of households fully paying the total cost of services rendered against those that are partially paying, and those who are not at all paying.

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