The Impact of Organisational Structures on Service Delivery: A Case Study of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality.

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Thesis submitted in whole fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Public Administration at the University of Stellenbosch.

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March 2007

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it to any university for a degree.

Signature:………………………   **Date:…………………………**

ABSTRACT

The uMgungundlovu District Municipality is one of the ten district municipalities of the KwaZulu-Natal Province which was formed after the disestablishment of the Indlovu Regional Council in the year 2000. This Municipality has within it seven local municipalities that have varying capacity in terms of service provision. The thesis investigates how the evolution of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality's organisational structure has impacted on the Municipality's service delivery over the past eight years. The investigated problem is that the Municipality and its predecessor have never reviewed their organisational structures, while their functions, leadership and staff complement have changed over the past eight years. The purpose of the study was to address a practical problem at the Municipality, with the intention to throw some light on the impact of organisational structures on service delivery, and possibly suggest some solutions for the Municipality to implement.

The investigation focuses on the challenges faced by the Technical Department, as a line-function department, in their efforts to deliver services to the public. The exploration begins with an analysis of the structure that populated the erstwhile Indlovu Regional Council, and follows through to the structure of the current Municipality. The investigation has been done through the consultation of documentation of the Municipality as well as interviewing staff and management of the Municipality. The staff who were interviewed included technical staff who were employed during the reign of the Regional Council, as well as technical staff who joined the organisation once it had become the District Municipality. In addition, Human Resources staff, performance management staff, the staff union representative and

general staff were also interviewed. The focus of the study excludes political influences on the problem of the Municipality due to the sensitivity of this issue. However, responses from the interviews that relate to the role of political principals of the Municipality have been discussed to illustrate the necessary points.

The thesis draws on relevant theories, legislation and policies to form the basis for the arguments that are put forward. The legislation and policies used include national, provincial and local government legislation and policies that guide the functioning of municipalities.

One of the main findings of the investigation is that the staff and management do not have the same understanding of organisational structures or of their functions. The management understand that organisational structures need to be done with all staff of the organisation and that the structure should be informed by the organisational strategy to ensure that all plans that are followed thereafter assist with the implementation of the organisational strategy; the Integrated Development Strategy. The staff, on the other hand, owing to their exclusion from the relevant organisational structuring and design processes, believes that their work is separate from the organisational strategy. Furthermore, the staff argued that the formulation and implementation of the organisational strategy is the responsibility of the management and they, as low-level staff, have to focus on their 'normal work'.

One of the limitations to the study is that one of the senior managers that was going to be part of the study group resigned before the interviews were conducted. It is submitted that this did not substantially alter the conclusions

of the thesis because the Municipal Manager, as the manager of the senior manager and as the Chief Information Officer and Accounting Officer, was available for the interview and has provided the required information. The thesis concludes that **the Municipality's service delivery efforts can only be efficient and sustainable if the organisation ensures that its structure is informed by its strategy, and that these are both reviewed at regular intervals to ensure that this is done in an up-to-date manner**.

OPSOMMING

Die Umgungundlovu Distrik Munisipaliteit is een van tien distrik munisipaliteite in die KwaZulu-Natal Provinsie wat gestig is nadat die voormalige Indlovu Streeksraad in 2000 ontbind is. Die Distrik Munisipaliteit is saamgestel uit sewe plaaslike regerings met uiteenlopende institusionele kapasiteit vir die doeleindes van diensverskafing. Die tesis ondersoek die impak van die evolusie van die organisasiestruktuur van die Umgundundlovu Distrik Munisipaliteit op diensverskaffing oor die afgelope agt jaar. Die problem wat ondersoek sal word is dat die Umgundundlovu Distrik Munisipaliteit en sy voorganger, nooit die struktuur van die organisasie hersien het nie, ondanks die veranderinge oor die laaste agt jaar in die organisasie se funksies, leierskap en personeel. Die doel van die studie was om 'n praktiese problem in die Munisipaliteit aan te spreek en om lig te werp op die impak wat organisasiestruktuur het op diensverskaffing en om ook moontlike oplossings voor te stel vir implementering deur die Munisipaliteit.

Die fokus van die ondersoek is op die Tegniese Departement en die uitdagings wat die Department in die gesig staar in die poging om dienste aan die publiek te verskaf. Die ondersoek begin deur die analise van die voormalige Indlovu Streeksraad se struktuur en volg dit dan tot met die bestaande struktuur. Die ondersoek is gebaseer op die bestudering van dokumentasie asook onderhoude wat gevoer is met personeel en die bestuur van die munisipatiteit. Die onderhoude wat gevoer is sluit in personeel wat in diens was van die Tegniese Departement tydens die funksionering van die voormalige Indlovu Streeksraad, asook personeel wat aangesluit het na die totstandkoming van die Distrik Munisipaliteit. Die ondersoek sluit die politieke invloed op die probleem uit as gevolg van die sensitiwe aard van die kwessie. Sekere aspekte wat verband hou met die rol van die Munisipaliteit se politieke hoofde wat gedurende die onderhoude uitgelig is, word egter wel bespreek om bepaalde punte te illustreer.

Die vertrekpunt van die tesis is die relevante teorieë, wetgewing, en beleide wat as basis dien vir die argumente wat voorgelê word. Die wetgewing en beleide wat gebruik word sluit die van nasionale, provinsiale en plaaslike regerings vlakke in wat die funksionering van plaaslike regerings reguleer.

Een van die hoof bevindinge van die ondersoek is dat die personeel en bestuur nie dieselfde begrip van die organisasie se struktuur of funksies deel nie. Die bestuur het begrip daarvoor dat die struktuur in oorlegpleging met al die personeel daargestel moet word en dat die struktuur van die organisasie deur die organisasie se strategie geïnformeer moet word, sodat alle verdere planne daarna bydra tot die uitvoering van die organisasiestrategie, naamlik die Geintegreerde Ontwikkelings Strategie. Die personeel, aan die ander kant, omrede hulle van die strukturering en ontwerpsprosesse uitgesluit was, is van opinie dat die uitvoering van hulle take apart van organisasiestrategie geskied. Verder huldig die personeel ook die opinie dat die formulering en implementering van die organisasie se strategie die verantwoordelikheid van bestuur is en dat die personeel in die laer range eerder op hul "normale werk" moet fokus.

Een van die studie se beprekings was dat een van die senior bestuurders wat deel van die studiegroep gevorm het bedank het voordat die onderhoud kon plaasvind. Alhoewel dit gebeur het, het dit nie die bevindinge van die ondersoek wesenlik beïnvloed nie, aangesoen die Munisipale Bestuurder, as hoof van die organisasie, beskikbaar was vir die onderhoud en alle nodige inligting veskaf het. Die tesis se gevolgtrekking is dat **die Munisipaliteit se pogings tot dienslewering net effektief en lewensvatbaar kan wees as die organisasie verseker dat struktuur deur strategie informeer word en dat dit op 'n gereelde basis hersien word om te verseker dat dit op datum bly**.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the priceless assistance of the following people, without whom, this thesis would not have been completed.

My supervisor, Prof. Kobus Muller, for his dedicated guidance and availability to help me throughout the process.

All the staff and management of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality who participated in the research interviews that were conducted. I appreciate their dedication of time to assist me with the information I required.

My colleagues, who helped in different ways, especially Mr. Khaveen Sivenendan, for helping with all the maps.

My fellow MPA2 students, Mr. Bongumusa Bhengu, Mr. Goodman Ndlovu and Mr. Hulukani Bhila, for encouraging me and competing with me on the race to complete the thesis within record time. I appreciate their involvement, they were worthy opponents, I am glad we all reached the finish line, together!

My parents, for always trusting in me and encouraging me to do my best. Ngiyabonga ma-Donda amahle!

My brother-in-law Mr. Xolani Vilakazi, for always being available to help me track down relevant reading material at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. *Ngiyabonga mfana ka- Mlotshwa.*

My husband, for doing everything possible, including cooking, to ensure that I have enough time to work on my thesis. *Ngiyabonga Gubese*!

Lastly, but certainly not least, GOD, for giving the wisdom, health, brain capacity and financial capacity to be able to do this thesis.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the research topic, and discusses how it was going to be investigated and reported. The research topic is **the evolution of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality's organisational structure, with particular focus on how it has been formed over the past eight years, what impact the changes made have had on service delivery, its organisational design, as well as its leadership and management**. Particularly, the research assesses the organisational structural changes that the Municipality's Technical Department has undergone over the past eight years, the influence or impact legislation and policies have had on it, and how this has impacted on the **service delivery responsibilities of the Municipality**.

The chapter begins with a presentation of the problem being investigated and the rationale and purpose of the study, followed by a section on the methodology used to investigate the problem. The chapter further presents a general idea of the key areas that are a focus of the interview questions that were asked in order to obtain insight and clarity on the topic. These questions are regarded as useful in putting forward the main argument of this research project, which is that strategy should come before structure and not structure before strategy, otherwise service delivery will not be as effective and efficient as required and envisaged. It is argued that this sequence will allow the organisation to structure itself so as to be in a position to implement the strategy, and also be able to review its organisational structure whenever its strategy is amended to ensure effective and efficient service delivery.

This chapter further discusses the size and members of the group that was interviewed to obtain information for the research project, as well as how the data was analysed and processed. The chapter is concluded with a summary of the main points as well as the linkages to the following chapter.

1.1. CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

The South African local government system has evolved over time in terms of its functions, scope of operation, leadership and organisational structure. These changes are reflected in the type of local government bodies that have been put in place to manage service delivery over the past ten years. One of the most crucial aspects of this evolution of local government organisations is linked to the changes that need to be made to organisational structures to ensure that they enable the institutions to deal with their service delivery responsibilities, at any given time.

The implications of these legislations and policies will be described and linked to the practices, organisational structure and service delivery initiatives of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality, as part of the investigation of the service delivery problem.

1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The identified problem relates to the fact that, as the uMgungundlovu District Municipality's structure was inherited from the erstwhile Indlovu Regional Council, which was formed as a response to the service delivery requirements of its constituency, the structure has never been reviewed or suitably changed to reflect and accommodate the new service delivery responsibilities that the uMgungundlovu District Municipality has received, as its powers, functions and strategy, as well as its leadership

and management changed. As organisational structural changes are regarded as key to a successful implementation of a service delivery strategy, it is noted with concern that the Municipality has not engaged in an organisational design process.

It is from this background that the topic has been selected, recognising a need to investigate how the failure to bring the organisational structure into line with its current responsibilities impacts on the service delivery expected from the Municipality. Further to this lack of an organisational design process, the research also investigates whether the Municipality has a theoretical basis for any of the ad hoc structural changes and decisions that it has made and continues to make.

1.3. <u>TOPIC SELECTION</u>

The topic selected to investigate the problem is:

'The Impact of Organisational Structures on Service Delivery: A Case Study of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality.'

The uMgungundlovu District Municipality is one of the municipalities that were formed with the introduction of the new system of local government in the year 2000. Like many others, it replaced a Regional Council that used to operate in its area of jurisdiction, and encompasses areas that used to fall within the erstwhile Town Councils that were responsible for service provision, and have now been replaced by local municipalities.

To ensure direction to the investigation, the main question posed was:
What is the role of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality's organisational structure in light of its service delivery responsibilities?

1.4. SUBSIDIARY QUESTIONS

The following are some of the key areas that will be explored to gain insight into the main research question:

- The historical and current context in terms of powers and functions that relates to the existence of the Municipality;

- How the previous and current organisational structures of the Municipality were formulated, and what basis/guidelines were followed;

- What processes influence the design, review and population of the Municipality's organisational structure, e.g. how the current organisational structure compares with previous organisational structures and how these address service delivery requirements; and

- The challenges faced by the administration's leadership in ensuring that the relevant changes occur. For example, political, financial or administrative challenges that tends to impact on organisational design processes.

2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The topic has been selected in order to address a practical problem at the Municipality, with the intention to throw some light on the impact of organisational structures on service delivery and possibly provide some suggested solutions for the Municipality to implement. The service delivery issues that face the uMgungundlovu District Municipality, particularly linked to its organisational structure and design processes, are

an important focus of investigation, as this problem is not unique to the subject Municipality but is also experienced by other municipalities.

The purpose of the study is therefore to uncover the basis on which the Municipality's organisational structure is formed, the process followed to do the organisation design, weaknesses of the structure and how that affects service delivery as well as how that can be overcome to expedite service delivery.

3.   RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1.RESEARCH DESIGN

The aim of the research method chosen was to find out how much impact the lack of the evolution of an organisational structure has on service delivery. The research project uses an ethnographic approach, which is done through the use of a case study, as the means to investigate the problem. Exploratory questions have been used to acquire the necessary data to inform the conclusions and recommendations that are made in the last chapter.

Further, because of the small size of the organisation and the type of information that is required to be gathered, the research is confined to the views and perceptions of staff members who are part of a study group comprising staff members who were with the organisation before its transformation as well as staff who arrived after the transformation occurred. In addition to documentary sources, face-to-face semi-structured interviews were done with individual staff members and management. The semi-structured interview was chosen because of its flexibility in allowing the researcher to prompt the respondents to elaborate on their responses.

This method is flexible in that it allows the capturing of responses (subjective and objective) that will be required from the respondents in terms of their opinions on how things used to be and how it has changed, and how they see or link the various changes to the impact to service delivery. For the same reasons, this method was also used in interviews with management and other general staff members of the organisation.

3.2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The following method has been used to research the identified problem:

3.2.1. Primary sources of data collection

The primary sources of data are the research respondents, as most of the practical information was obtained from them.

3.2.2. The study group

The following formed part of the study group that served as the primary source of data:

- Management of the Municipality: Three candidates were interviewed from this category, including the Municipal Manager, the Strategic Executive Manager for Community Services and the Acting Strategic Executive Manager for Technical Services.

These individuals were selected because they have some knowledge of the various attempts that have been made to resolve the problem, and would be able to shed some light on whether such attempts have helped the situation or worsened it.

- Key personnel from other departments, such as the Human Resources Manager, the Union representative, and the Performance Management System Officer, have been valuable in providing a background to and an understanding of the processes that have been followed through the years to formulate the Municipality's organisational structure, the various problems involved in initiating the organisational structure's review, and the effects of this on staff, as well as on overall service delivery;

- Technical staff of the Technical Department – out of the current staff of twenty (including administration and support personnel), at least four employees have been with the Municipality through the changes in powers and functions, and were in a position to provide more substantive responses to the questions. To get a clearer perspective on the problem, at least three of the staff who only know the current organisational structure of the Municipality were interviewed. These were included so that they could provide a fresh view of the situation, their perception of the problem and whether they think the organisational structure is the cause of service delivery problems or at least related to such, and

to get their views on how they think the problem could be resolved.

It needs to be noted that, as much as political problems may be mentioned as part of the responses from the research subjects, this will not be the focus of the research project, as it is very sensitive and controversial, and would be outside the parameters of this study, as well as against the interests of the researcher. The only reference that will be made to the political aspects of the problem will be done as part of the analysis of responses or to illustrate a point.

3.3.3. <u>Secondary sources of data collection</u>

Information has been gathered from books, reports, legislation, policies, and through personal communication. This information was accessed from different places, such as the University of KwaZulu-Natal's library, local public libraries, the internet and the uMgungundlovu District Municipality's archives registry.

3.3.4. <u>Data analysis and processing</u>

The data has been manually analysed in order to draw some conclusions relating to the problem, as well as to be in a position to explain why the problem is happening, what causes it and to suggest possible solutions. The collected data has been manually analysed and interpreted by the researcher, translated into statements, conclusions and summaries of common and uncommon views of the

different research subjects, in order to demonstrate the differences in the views and understanding of the problem between the staff and management.

As the aim of the study was to get an understanding of the extent to which organisational structures impact on service delivery, be it positive or negative, the results of the analysis have therefore been used to assess the extent of this impact.

4.   STRUCTURE OF THESIS

The thesis comprises six chapters that differ in terms of length and content, and they contain the following:

Chapter one presents the introduction to the thesis, which basically introduces the problem, key areas of the problem that were investigated, how the problem was going to be investigated, who the research subjects were and how they were going to be consulted.

Chapter two presents some of the theory used to form the basis for the argument that is put forward. This includes various views on organisational structures, the functions and design of organisational structures, determinants of organisational structures, as well as a debate on how and when organisational structures should be formulated and reviewed.

Chapter three presents an analysis of the South African legal context by exploring relevant and applicable legislation and policies that guide the formation, management and monitoring of municipalities as service delivery drivers. The chapter discusses aspects from legislation and

policies that determine the environment within which municipalities operate.

Chapter four presents a description of the case study in order to establish the type of organisation that is being scrutinised, the type of organisational design processes the Municipality has employed over the past eight years, and the type of organisational structures it has formulated. This chapter also describes the findings of the research without being evaluative.

Chapter five presents an evaluation of the findings of the research, and links this to issues that the Municipality faces relating to the impact of service delivery.

Chapter six presents an analysis of the findings and makes certain conclusions and recommendations that are suggested as solutions to the problem. The chapter also discusses suggested future research topics that could be explored to gain more insight on the topic of organisational design structuring. Limitations of the research are discussed to set the parameters within which the study was done, as well as problems that were encountered that may or may not substantially have influenced the conclusions of this research project.

5.   SUMMARY

This chapter has presented information stating the need and importance of the research project, the problem statement, the rationale and benefits of investigating the problem to provide some clarity on the link between organisational structures and service delivery. It serves as an introductory chapter to the research, and provides direction as to how the investigation of the problem has been done, as well as how the findings have been analysed.

The next chapter presents some organisational design theories that were used as framework for the research.

CHAPTER 2: ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND DESIGN

2. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the framework underlying the formulation and analysis of organisational structures and their design in order to form the background for the evaluation of the organisational structure of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality. The chapter presents concepts and theories selected for the investigation of the evolution of the organisational structure of the Municipality, focusing on the Technical Department, as well as its impact on service delivery over the past eight years.

The chapter begins with definitions of key terms that are used in the description of organisational structures to establish a common understanding of how the terms are used. This is followed by a section that unpacks what is meant by organisational structure so that a clear picture of the subject is created.

This section is followed by a discussion of the origins, functions, patterns and types of organisational structures as a way of showing the various options that organisations have when selecting organisational structures. This section also provides suggestions as to the type of organisational structures that certain organisations can adopt, and this will be used to explore the type of organisational structure that the subject Municipality has had over the past eight years.

Following from this is a discussion of organisational design, its link to organisational structures, its different types and functions, as well as the value of this information for this research. The chapter also presents a

critique of organisational structures and their design, and this will need to be kept in mind when the Municipality's organisational structure is analysed and evaluated.

This critique is vital, as it reflects that organisational structures and their design can be flawed; hence careful consideration needs to be given when opting for a specific type of organisational structure and design. The chapter is concluded by assessing the relevance of these theories to this research, as well as highlighting the links to the following chapter.

Organisations tend to be structured in different ways, in some instances according to their functions, and in others according to their size or geographic locality. However, there is no general manner in which organisations get structured or their organisational structures are developed; some organisations adopt the structure of organisations that are similar to them in size and function, while others come up with their own structures to address their unique situations. This lack of a theoretical and systematic way of structuring organisations can be problematic when organisations use or adopt structures that do not make them more effective in their work.

Various scholars provide some explanation as to how organisations are structured, and their theories are used to analyse the system of organisational structuring that is used by the subject organisation. The theories are used to provide a background and understanding of how organisations can be or are structured, as well as an investigation of the type of organisations that opt for different structures. The discussion in this chapter forms the background to the subsequent chapters that evaluate the subject case study and research findings in detail.

It should be noted that an assessment of the organisational structure theories is not the aim of this thesis, except as background for the analysis of the Municipality's organisational structure in order to draw conclusions on how it impacts on service delivery. It is however critical that these theories be analysed to facilitate an understanding of the argument that will be used in the research; which is that organisational structure should follow strategy and be regularly reviewed, otherwise service delivery tends to be negatively affected.

The theories are also used to determine circumstances under which organisations tend to have specific structures, as well as when they tend to be reviewed. Most importantly, the theory will be used to provide the rationale for why organisations tend not to review their organisational structures and the effect this has or may have on the organisations' effectiveness.

2.1. <u>DEFINITIONS</u>

The research uses various key terms that pertain to and clarify organisational structures and their design, and these need to be defined so that a common understanding of the terms' use is established. Below are the terms and their definitions, as adopted from Robbins and Barnwell (2002):

2.1.1. ORGANISATION STRUCTURE – the degree of complexity, formalisation and centralisation in an organisation (Robbins and Barnwell 2002:7)

2.1.2. COMPLEXITY – the degree of horizontal, vertical and spatial differentiation in an organisation (Robbins and Barnwell 2002:95)

2.1.3. FORMALISATION – Robbins and Barnwell (2002:101) define this as the degree to which jobs within the organisation are standardised. They argue that in highly formalised jobs, incumbents have very minimal discretion as to how the work can be done.

2.1.4. OPERATING CORE – the part of an organisation encompassing employees who perform the basic work related to the production of products and services (Robbins and Barnwell 2002:111).

2.1.5. CENTRALISATION – this is defined by Robbins and Barnwell (2002:105) as the degree to which decision making is concentrated in a single point in the organisation usually top management.

2.1.6. COORDINATION – is the process of integrating the objectives and activities of the separate units of an organisation in order to achieve organisational goals (Robbins and Barnwell 2002:109).

2.1.7. ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS – is the degree to which an organisation attains its short and long-term goals, the selection of which reflects strategic constituencies, the self-interests of the evaluator and the life stage of the organisation (Robbins and Barnwell 2002:87).

2.1.8. SPAN OF CONTROL – is the number of subordinates that a manager can supervise effectively (Robbins and Barnwell 2002:97).

2.2.   ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES

2.2.1   UNDERSTANDING ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES

It is critical to understand what an organisation is prior to discussing organisational structures and what they reflect of organisations. Brown and Moberg (1980:91) provide a very useful description and analysis of what an organisation is, and this theory is useful for the basic understanding and analysis of organisational structures. They argue that organisations are 'permanent social entities' that are characterised by the ability 'to continue existing and operating even while changing top managers'. This element is critical when considering the fact that organisations can and have existed over time and have changed or can change their political and administrative hierarchy, while maintaining that which makes them organisations.

Further, the writers state that organisations are characterised by a goal-oriented nature, specialisation, and, of most importance to the purposes of this research, organisations have structures. This point relates to the fact that the organisations' focus and functions can change over time while they maintain their essence of being an organisation.

A response provided by Learned and Sproat (1966:02) to the question of what an organisation is, sums up the above views and highlights the fact that organisations are complex entities that cannot be defined in one sentence. Their view is that 'an attempt to synchronise recent definitions indicates that a complex of related features is implied; these include (1) a purpose, a goal or goals; (2) prescribed activities designed to implement that purpose,

and division of activities into jobs which can be assigned to internal members of the organisation; (3) the integration of jobs into units which can be coordinated by various means, including a formal hierarchy of a chain of command; (4) member's motivations, interactions, attitudes, and values, some of which may be prescribed in connection with goal-oriented activities, while others are voluntary and emergent; (5) processes – such as decision-making, communicating, controlling, rewarding and punishing – which are of crucial importance largely because they are used to define or implement goals, or to keep the different parts of the organisation operating as much as possible in line with over-all objectives; and (6) an organisational pattern'. According to this response, organisations are about the organisation itself, the humans/employees in it, the process used to guide how the employees are to interact with each other, as well as with the organisation.

Having clarified what an organisation is, Brown and Moberg (1980:91) argue that organisational structures are 'the prescribed patterns of work-related behaviour that are deliberately established for the accomplishment of organisational goals'. In their view, organisational structure is one of the most important factors in determining the success or failure for an organisation to achieve its goals. Of critical importance to note is that, as much as Brown and Moberg realise the impact of changes in organisation's political and administrative hierarchy, organisations' structures are regarded as key to ensuring their success.

On the same note, Khandwala (1977:483-486) argues that organisational structures have superstructures and infrastructures. Superstructure refers to the way an organisation is

departmentalised – how its personnel are grouped into departments, divisions or sections. He argues that the superstructure of an organisation tells us at a glance how the organisation is geared to meet its tasks, and it represents the top management's administrative strategy.

The presentation of organisational structures therefore needs to be as clear as possible and as reflective as possible of the organisational strategy. For example, if the organisation deals mostly with poverty alleviation issues, then its local economic development or community development department should be large and linked to positions with the required power and influence to make things happen in terms of this function.

Functions of organisational structures therefore include the fact that structure is most useful 'not only in specifying the relationships of work activities, but also in defining authority relationships (Brown and Moberg 1980:91). This is crucial in how staff relate to each other and how well they can work together to ensure the effectiveness of the organisation. It follows from this that organisational structures need to be as flexible as possible, and should always be reviewed to ensure that they remain relevant to the nature of the organisation, the nature of work or functions, as well as the focus of the organisation.

The review of organisational structures is therefore critical, as it can provide guidance as to the type of working and authority relationships that can exist within an organisation. For the purposes of this research, the term 'organisation' will be used the same way Learned and Sproat (1966:02) uses it.

Brown and Moberg (1980:95) provide an overview of the evolution of structures and state that organisational structures are changed for the following reasons:

- to improve the performance of the organisation;
- to fine tune the organisation;
- to improve the total organisational performance (the main reason why managers opt for the review of their organisations' organisational structure).

They argue that 'a distinguishing feature of all organisations is that they strive to accomplish desired ends called goals and objectives; structure and goals ideally have a means-ends relationship, that is; an organisations' structure should facilitate the accomplishment of its goals'. It is therefore necessary that whenever an organisation's goals and focus change, its organisational structure also get changed to align it with the future or anticipated goals and functions, in order to maintain its relevance and effectiveness.

On this note, Hilliard (1995:09) argues that internal organisation such as internal organisational structures, amongst other things, are some of the factors causing a decline in public sector performance. He elaborates that it is not easy to promote productivity improvement in the public sector, since it is rather an elusive concept owing to numerous qualitative, political and other constraints within which the public sector operates. He also argues that another factor causing a decline in public sector performance is the incorrect use of the human resources. He argues that 'human resources could be unproductive because of the employees themselves and/or an ineffective managerial style'.

Flynn (1993: 164-165) discovered that the reorganisation of local government became popular in the 1970s since it was believed that restructuring local government would assist in the improvement of service delivery. He cautions that investigations of the performance problems of local government need to take this into account. Implied by this statement is that there is more that can impact on organisational performance than an organisational structure that is either relevant or not relevant.

2.2.2. FUNCTIONS OF ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES

Khandwala (1977:483) contends that an organisational structure has three functions, which are:

- It affords the organisation the mechanisms with which to reduce external influences and uncertainty;

- It enables the organisation to undertake a variety of activities through devices such as departmentalisation, specialisation, division of labour, and delegation of authority; and

- It enables the organisation to keep its activities coordinated, to pursue goals, and to have a focus in the midst of diversity.

These functions have been useful in the analysis of the municipality's structure in relation to the reasons behind its formation.

2.2.3. DETERMINANTS OF ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES

There are various contingencies of organisational structure, and these tend to influence organisations differently. Robbins and Barnwell (2002:137-296) list strategy, organisation size, technology, environment and power-control as contingencies of structure.

The writers (Robbins and Barnwell 2002:139) define strategy as 'the adoption of courses of action and the allocation of resources necessary to achieve the organisation's goals'. They argue that strategies need to evolve over time so that they keep in tune with the organisations' goals. They further argue that strategy can be defined according to two levels, the corporate level and the business level.

They go on to suggest that strategy needs to consider both means and ends which can be influenced by other factors, such as environment and technology. The writers raise a question as to whether structure influences strategy or strategy influences structure. They conclude that structure can limit the flexibility of strategy if it is at the forefront, whereas strategy can positively influence structure.

The argument put forward in this research project is that structure is too limiting and would not allow an organisation diversity and creativity; hence it is argued that structure should follow strategy so that the structure can be populated to ensure that the organisation performs according to the agreed means and ends.

Robbins and Barnwell (2002:173-178) also discuss organisation size as one of the contingencies of structure and define it as the 'total number of employees in the organisation'. They conclude that 'size does not dictate all of an organisation's structure but is important in predicting some dimensions of structure'.

Technology is defined by Robbins and Barnwell (2002:229) as 'the processes and methods that transform inputs to outputs in the organisation'. Robbins and Barnwell further argue that the environment also influences the type of structure that organisations tend to adopt. However, the environment-structure relationship is complicated, hence they conclude that:

- 'the environment's effect on an organisation is a function of dependence;
- a dynamic environment has more influence than does a stable one;
- complexity and environmental uncertainty are inversely related;
- formalisation and environmental uncertainty are inversely related;
- the more complex the environment, the greater the decentralisation;
- extreme hostility in the environment leads to temporary centralisation.' (Robbins and Barnwell 2002:262)

The writers (Robbins and Barnwell 2002:294) further suggest that, in terms of the power-control view, those in power select an organisational structure that will, to the maximum degree possible, maintain and enhance their control. According to the writers, power can be in hands of management, those who control scarce

resources that are important in the organisation, by holding hierarchical authority as well as having a central position in the organisation. They argue that management can be but one of those with power who tend to influence structure, since they are not the only group that can have power. This point will need to be kept in mind during the ensuing investigation in order to discover which groups have power in the subject organisation, as well as how these relations are reflected in the structure.

The five contingencies of structure mentioned above all have some influence on structure, especially when taken together. On this note, Robbins and Barnwell (2002:294) add that, strategy, size, technology and environment define the minimal level of effectiveness and set the parameters within which self-serving decision choices will be made. These conclusions on the effects of the determinants of structure will be very useful in the analysis of the Municipality's structure, as well as aiding an understanding of the environment within which it operates.

2.2.4. PATTERNS OF ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES

Hilliard (1995:57-58) argues that there are two main types of organisational shapes or patterns: the steeped (tall) pyramidal structure and the flattened pyramidal structure. He explains that the flattened pyramidal structure has a few levels of hierarchy where there is more generalisation and less specialisation of tasks, functions or work (Hilliard 1995:57-58). This type of organisational structure is also described by Craythorne (1993:253), who states that in South African local government, it is usual to have these two types of organisational structures: a long flat organisation with many departments or a more pyramidal type

with fewer departments. He argues that the flat organisation allows for specialisation and better communication between the specialists and the chief executive officer (CEO).

The steeped pyramidal structure, on the other hand, is characterised by 'numerous levels of authority in the hierarchy as well as usually large degree of specialisation' Hilliard (1995:09). The pyramidal form of organisation compresses specialisation into a smaller number of units and can be said to ease the job of the CEO in respect of the span of control.

Hilliard (1995:09) further argues that most public sector organisations are characterised by the steeped pyramidal structure, and tend to have employees specialise in specific fields and find it difficult to adapt in times of change. On this point, he contends that employees tend to need to be reoriented or retrained to be able to handle their new functions and responsibilities. In addition to being costly, he argues that this is time-consuming and could impede on the productivity of the institution. For this reason, he concludes that public organisations usually grapple with the difficulty of managing change and consequently of improving productivity.

Further, Hilliard (1995:09) states that organisational structures are divided vertically as well as horizontally for different purposes, and concludes that the way this is done will have serious impact on the way personnel performs. This impact on performance is linked to the type of work and authority relationships that would be encouraged by an organisational structure. This point supports Learned and Sproat's (1966:23) argument that organisations are complex and characterised by issues of authority and work

relations, over and above issues relating to performance and management, amongst others.

On the other hand, Craythorne (1993:255) argues that 'if an organisation is allowed to grow in a haphazard, unplanned and un-coordinated manner, the flow of work will be confused, resources will be wasted, it will be difficult to control costs, and service standards are likely to be unsatisfactory because of bad planning or lack of planning, and it will create uncertainty'. He further discusses the terminology used in a municipality's organisational structures and says that 'in general, a department is a single independent specialised unit, although where the pyramidal form is used, it may also be a collection of different specialties. In this case, branches, divisions and sections may and often are subdivisions within a department, but not always so, sometimes detached smaller units are called divisions or sections'.

As a result of specialisation and where specialists are normally located in the organisational structure, Craythorne (1993:255) argues that specialists are usually dissatisfied with the access they have to the top decision-makers within the organisation. The writer describes issues of span of control and discusses control as one of the critical issues to consider when formulating an organisational structure that is to be effective and efficient.

Craythorne (1993:255) also discusses the significance of job analysis in the evolution of and formation of organisational structures, and states that organisational structures need to be reviewed from time to time. He contends that the job analysis can be done in terms of functions, the relevance and necessity of the

functions, and whether the positions are linked together in the best way.

On the same topic, Mintzberg (1979:300) argues that circumstances of organisations or their environment tend to determine the type and size of structure an organisation is going to opt for. However, he asks a very critical question: Does structure follow strategy or should strategy be formed to be in line with structure when organisational structures are formed?

He states that this is not an easy question to answer, and different organisations either start with the structure or the strategy. However, the main argument put forward in this research is that strategy should be followed by structure and not structure by strategy. This sequence will allow the organisation to structure itself so as to be in a position to implement the strategy, and also be able to review its organisational structure whenever its strategy is reviewed.

Learned and Sproat (1966: 23) quote Simon where he argues that 'structure must be designed mainly with reference to the kinds of decisions that the organisation will be called upon to make'. Their argument tends to support the conclusion of this research that strategy should precede structure as strategy tends to be limited by structure if structure is put in place before strategy.

2.2.5. TYPES OF ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES

Mintzberg (1979: 300) lists the following five types of organisational structure that can be adopted by organisations, depending on their circumstances, focus and functions:

The simple structure which is characterised by 'vertical and horizontal decentralisation whereby there is direct supervision of staff, low complexity, little formalisation with authority centralised in one single person' (Robbins and Barnwell 2002:112-126).

Mintzberg (1979:302) argues that organisations of this kind have 'little or no techno-structure, few support staff, a loose division of labour, minimal differentiation among its units and a small managerial hierarchy, with most of the staff hired on contract whenever needed, as opposed to being permanent. He argues that new organisations tend to adopt this type of structure as they would not have had the time to elaborate their administrative structure, and therefore concludes that most organisations pass through the simple structure in their formative years.

This structure is regarded as advantageous in terms of its flexibility and adaptability, but has the disadvantage of being the riskiest structure since it 'hinges on the health and whims of one individual' (Mintzberg 1979:312). The writer further argues that, with the simple structure, structural change is not always easy, as the leader of the organisation may resist it because it usually affects him/her more than other members of staff.

Machine bureaucracy that is characterised by 'highly specialised, routine operating, very formalised procedures in the operating core, a proliferation of rules, regulations, and formalised communication throughout the organisation, large-sized units at the operating level, reliance on the functional basis for grouping tasks, relatively centralised power for decision-making, and an elaborate administrative structure with a sharp distinction between

the line and staff' (Mintzberg 1979:315). Robbins and Barnwell (2002:112-126) state that this structure is also characterised by centralised authority and decision-making that follows the chain of command.

Mintzberg (1979:315) contends that this kind of structure is found in well-established organisations that are also large in size with the disadvantages of being difficult to modify when conditions change, and being unable to handle human conflict, as everything is standardised to the last detail. He says that examples of such structures are found in public institutions.

Professional bureaucracy that is characterised by vertical and horizontal decentralisation, whereby there is high standardisation of skills and professionals are given considerable control over their work as the organisation relies on the guidance of their expertise. This structure is also characterised by a complex and stable environment whereby the factors of size and age are of less significance. According to Mintzberg (1979:349), this type of structure is popular since it is very democratic, but he cautions against its inflexibility, which is one of its main disadvantages.

Robbins and Barnwell (2002:122) recommend this structure for complex and stable environments.

Divisionalised form or structure that is characterised by limited vertical decentralisation, has standardisation of outputs and relies on a market basis for grouping units which are predominantly independent of each other. Mintzberg (1979:381) argues that this type of structure is quite popular in the public and institutional sectors.

Robbins and Barnwell (2002:116) contend that the same form can be used when an organisation chooses a diversification strategy, i.e. to become a multi-product or multi-market organisation. However, they warn that this type of structure is appropriate as long as the organisation's environment remains stable and the technology routine.

Adhocracy that is characterised by selective decentralisation, with a mutually adjusted prime coordinating mechanism. Mintzberg states that various conditions are said to influence adhocracy: the environment, youth, technical system and fashion. He therefore contends that this structure is the least stable of the five types, as it would be difficult to maintain for long periods of time due to the influence of various forces. This structure is highly organic and has a high horizontal job specialisation based on formal training.

Some of adhocracy's disadvantages are its incompetence to execute ordinary things, having high communication costs, as well as unbalanced workloads. Minztberg (1979:477) concludes that the theory of structural configurations can help in understanding why and how organisations undertake transitions from one structure to another. He argues that there are two major patterns that have appeared in relation to the transitions of organisational structures, and these are both related to stages in the structural development of organisations.

The first pattern applies to organisations that begin in simple environments; this transition occurs when organisations realise that their current structure is no longer appropriate and they move to a more complex structure. For example, if an organisation begins

with a simple structure, it may not be able to address all the organisation's needs in the long run and the machine bureaucracy may need to be adopted as the next complex structure. It should be noted that the structure to which the transition happens is not automatic but will be dictated by the circumstances of the organisation and the environment within which it operates.

The second pattern among the transitions applies to organisations that are formed in complex environments; in such cases, should any of the later-stage organisations find themselves in a hostile environment, they will tend to revert to the simple structure, and in cases where external control becomes a strong influence then the organisations will return to the machine bureaucracy as it is the most stable. However, organisations that start with the adhocracy structure tend to move to a bureaucracy structure such as the professional bureaucracy when their situation becomes less complex and needs more stability.

In some cases, organisations may begin with a professional bureaucracy, imitating the structure of other organisations, and may maintain this structure for the rest of their lives, unless their circumstances change and drive them to adopt the machine bureaucracy structure as it brings more stability.

It can be concluded that 'structural change often lags behind the new conditions that evoke them as change is usually resisted' (Minztberg 1979: 399-460). However, the writer further argues that the length of the lag between structural change and its application is affected by the pressures on the organisation to be more efficient. He therefore concludes that any new structure that

is formed is formed to solve old problems that the old structure could not solve.

2.2.6. CRITIQUE OF ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES

According to Lawton and Rose (1991:51), one of the most critical facts to remember is that organisational structures do not tell us everything we need to know about an organisation, and the following is noted as some of the weaknesses of an organisational structure, as normally illustrated by a chart;

- It tells us nothing about which departments or chief officers might be more important than others;
- Such charts are fairly simple in nature and do not indicate the complexity of the organisation;
- Such a vertical representation tells us nothing about the relationships that go on between the centre and the field offices;
- It tells us nothing about where the power is located;
- Such charts also tell us nothing about decisions, real channels of communication (it assumes these to be formal) and relationships (it assumes these to be hierarchical).

It is acknowledged that organisational structures do not paint a complete picture of organisations, but they certainly are a start, and whatever is contained in them needs to be substantiated by the use and analysis of the organisation's powers and functions and levels of authority to make them more meaningful.

The work of Lawton and Rose (1991:51) is useful in providing an understanding of what organisations are, what organisational

structures are, and the significance of reviewing them regularly to promote productivity and organisational performance. The theory of Lawton and Rose implicitly cautions against thinking or assuming that organisational structures are adequate to give information on organisations without raising the need for the enquirer to acquire more detail.

2.3.   ORGANISATIONAL DESIGN

2.3.1.   UNDERSTANDING ORGANISATIONAL DESIGN

Robbins and Barnwell (2002:112-126) describe organisation design as the constructing and changing of an organisation's structure to achieve the organisation's goals. They argue that constructing or changing an organisation's goals begins with a goal which must have a plan of how it is going to be achieved.

Mintzberg (1979:65) defines organisation structure design as 'turning those knobs that influence the division of labour and the coordinating mechanisms, thereby affecting how the organisation functions - how materials, authority, information, and decision-processes flow through it'. Organisation design clarifies the link between an organisation's structure and the functions of the different positions within organisation, which then lead to the type of structure that organisations tend to have. The writer uses four groups to analyse the link and coordination of organisational structure within an organisational design context. The four groups referred to are linked to the various designs, that of positions, superstructure, lateral linkages and decision-making systems in organisations. The design of organisations can be defined in relation to either the vertical or horizontal relations between positions, as well as the focus of the organisation.

Flynn (1993:171-173) argues that there are four questions that need to be asked when organisational design is to be done:

- What is it that is to be produced by the organisation? This refers to the responsibilities of the organisation.

- For whom is the service provided by the organisation? This refers to the clients/customers or consumers that are served by the organisation.

- How much of the service is required by the recipients?

- How much discretion in terms of budget allocation and spending does the responsible unit have within the organisation? The more discretion the unit has, the more work they will be able to do since there will be a few hurdles. He contends that very rigid controls over budgets and behaviour make service delivery units insensitive to the needs and wishes of their users.

Flynn (1993:171-173) concludes that if services are to be oriented towards their users, the organisational structure should be designed to ensure that the service delivery unit has sufficient support to be able to do its job. From a municipality point of view, it can be deduced that such support includes putting in place relevant and enabling internal policies, as well as allocating the unit with enough financial and human resources.

Further, Flynn (1993:179-180) warns that the organisational restructuring process is done to change processes within the organisation, as well 'changing the way people think about their position in the organisation', which may be a challenge. He says for example that people who have

spent an entire career receiving instructions and carrying them out will have difficulty when they have to take initiative.

Further, Flynn (1993:179-180) concludes that before organisational structures are done, organisations need to ensure that they are clear as to which aspect of their organisation is dominant. For example, he says that if the organisation puts emphasis on their users, then the structure should be 'designed to ensure that the service delivery unit has sufficient support to be able to do its job'. Flynn further suggests that, when organisational structures are developed, 'organisations must recognise the difference between control and support functions'. This relates to the fact that organisations tend to use the same staff for different functions, hence confusing the control and support foci.

Mintzberg (1979:18-34) provides a useful background to the understanding of how organisations are designed and links this analysis to how organisations are organised, their existence, their functions, and the relationship between their components and decision processes. He argues that organisations can be analysed through five basic parts which are:

- The operating core - this comprises those members of the organisation who perform the basic work related directly to the production of products and services.

- The middle line - these are middle line managers with formal authority.

- The techno structure - the control analysts of the techno structure serve to effect standardisation in the organisation.

- Support staff - these are units that provide support to the organisation outside the operating work flow.

▪ The strategic apex - this is charged with ensuring that the organisation serves its mission in an effective way, and also that it serves the needs of those people who control or otherwise have power over the organisation.

2.3.2. CRITERIA FOR ORGANISATIONAL DESIGN

Lawton and Rose (1991:42) provide a discussion of the formation of organisations and how this affects performance. They discuss the origins of public organisations, and state that these organisations come about through statutes and often have limited discretion about the range of services they provide. They contend that most public sector organisations are formal organisations, and they use the classic approach to analyse the characteristics of such organisations.

They argue that, in terms of the classic approach to organisations, organisations tend to be designed according to the following criteria:

▪ Knowledge and skills: departments are divided based on their knowledge in a subject area;
▪ Functions:many departments are divided into departments that are centred around the functions they perform i.e. personnel, finance, research, marketing;
▪ Time: organisations can be divided in terms of shifts that are done;
▪ Output: some organisations are divided according to their production of a particular product such as furniture or kitchenware;
▪ Clients: organisations may be divided according to clients that they serve, e.g. the senior citizen department; and

- Place: this is the geographic location of organisations, e.g. head office could be located in a different area from that of its implementation offices.

Lawton and Rose (1991:50) argue that most local government organisations are designed according to the functions they perform and the same is evident in the various organisational structures that they tend to have. It is suggested that these structures indicate the following:

- 'where control is located;
- the degree of centralisation;
- the division of labour;
- tasks; and
- hierarchies, etc'

This criterion has been quite useful in the analysis of the type of structure that the uMgungundlovu District Municipality has.

2.3.3. CRITIQUE OF ORGANISATIONAL DESIGN

Brown and Moberg (1980:95) provide a tool that can be used to analyse the different jobs and the different circumstances when job design or redesign (in a case of structural changes) is done. Of critical importance for the purposes of this research is their discussion of what they term 'the pitfalls of job redesign', which they state as;

- The problems in the workplace are not adequately diagnosed before jobs are redesigned;

- Sometimes the work itself is not actually changed;

- Unexpected effects often diminish or reverse the anticipated gains of the project;

- Rarely are job redesign projects systematically evaluated;

- Line managers, consulting staff members, and union officials do not obtain appropriate education in the theory and strategy of job design; and

- Traditional bureaucratic practise often creeps into job redesign activities.

Of critical relevance to this study is the pitfall mentioned under the fifth bullet above, and this point and the theory behind it will be explored further when the research survey is done and the subject Municipality's challenges and problems pertaining to organisational structures and job redesign are discussed.

One of the most critical problems to be aware of when redesigning jobs or analysing job redesign processes, is that some staff resist job redesign since they favour fragmented jobs. This point is very important since from the onset, it warns the researcher that problems of organisational non-performance do not always result from inappropriate organisational structures or management not accommodating all staff appropriately in the organisational structure - the staff itself can be a hurdle to service delivery!

2.4   **SUMMARY**

This chapter has presented concepts and theories pertaining to organisational structures and organisational design, which serve as a basis for the understanding

and analysis of organisational structures and design. The discussed theories will be used to analyse and understand the organisational structure of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality, in order to understand the basis on which its organisational structure has been formed.

The theories are relevant as they provide guidance on how organisational structures can be formed, after having provided a critique of what organisational structures tend to lack. The advantages and disadvantages of organisational structures and their design mentioned under section 2.2.4. are very useful and will be used in the recommendations that will be made in terms of the appropriateness of the current structure of the Municipality, as well as any suggested future structure.

The next chapter forms the basis upon which the assessment of the organisational structure of the Municipality will be made. The legislative framework for local government in South Africa will be presented as a way of explaining the context within which the Municipality has been formed and operates. The chapter also outlines the relevant local government legislation and policies that mandate the Municipality in terms of its powers and functions, are as well as the repercussions for failure to perform in terms of their mandate.

CHAPTER 3: SERVICE DELIVERY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONTEXT

3. <u>INTRODUCTION</u>

The South African government has promulgated a variety of laws and policies that provide municipalities with guidance on how they can organise themselves, give them authority to perform certain functions, and state the repercussions or penalties of failing to deliver the services they are tasked with. There are various laws and policies that influence the type of structure that municipalities such as the uMgungundlovu District Municipality have, as well as the focus that they tend to have. These laws and policies regarding the type of functions that municipalities are responsible for have been made at national level in order to ensure efficient and effective service delivery in their areas.

This chapter describes and analyses the legislation and policies that have influenced the environment within which municipalities operate in and formulate their organisational structures. The chapter begins with a discussion of national and provincial legislation and policies and ends with a discussion of the relevance of these to the research problem.

The discussion of the legislation and policies is done at a general level, and is applied to the subject Municipality in the evaluation of the research findings in the last chapter.

3.1. <u>EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY</u>

The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (WPTPS) of 1997 (3-4) has been formulated to provide a policy framework and a

practical implementation strategy for the transformation of public service delivery. This White Paper therefore guides public service delivery institutions on how they can transform and improve their service delivery efforts in order to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the way in which services are delivered. The policy proposes the transformation of the public service through the promotion of eight *Batho Pele* principles, which advocate for improved and efficient service delivery to the public. An important point that is stressed is that a guiding principle of the public service is the provision to the public of services that are efficient, equitable and continuous'.

Further, the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery of 1997 (4-5) states that 'improving public services means redressing the imbalances of the past, while maintaining continuity of service to all levels of society. This means changing the necessary systems that govern the way public services are offered, promoting transparency and providing information to the public'. The *Batho Pele* principles promote the concept that the public service should operate like a businesse and treated service recipients as customers who have the right to be treated with respect and provided with the relevant information.

The following are eight service delivery principles of *Batho Pele*:

1. Consultation: This means that the public needs to be consulted on the type, quality and level of service that they require so that they are given the level and type of service that they need. This principle promotes a move away from the top-down approach to service delivery to a bottom-up approach.

   When public service institutions used to decide for the public as to what type and level of service they would get, they were using a

top-down approach. The bottom-up approach, on the other hand, advocates for the public to tell the service delivery institutions what type of service they would like, and thus promotes choices for the public. The Municipal Systems Act, Act No. 32 of 2000, also promotes the consultation of people as part of the information gathering process that has to be embarked on in preparation of efficient and equitable service delivery, as it relates to Integrated Development Planning.

2.   Service standards: The public needs to be informed about what level and quality of service they are going to receive so that they know what to expect and can complain if they do not receive it. Linked to this is the proposal that the public should be able to make public service institutions responsible for failure to deliver on their promises. The White Paper on the Transformation of Public Service Delivery (1997:9) states that service standards must be set at a level that is demanding and realistic. This means that service standards should reflect a level of service which is higher than that currently offered, but which can be achieved with dedicated effort, by adopting more efficient and customer-focused working practices. These service standards are to be reviewed annually, and the standards changed once they have been met so that standards are always set high. Moreover, linked to this is the stipulation of the Municipal Systems Act of 2000 that local government should formulate Integrated Development Plans that are detailed and that specify the level and type of service that will be delivered, the time frame for delivery and a system for monitoring service delivery. Further, at local government level, a service delivery monitoring system is the Performance Management System which contains key performance areas and

indicators that the public need to be aware of so that they can assess the success or failure to deliver services.

3. Access: All citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are entitled, and targets should be set to ensure that access is always increased for people without particular services. It is also advocated that previously disadvantaged groups should be prioritised for service delivery in order to close the gaps or reduce service delivery gaps between those with services and those without.

   However, the policy states that the provision of access to services for previously disadvantaged communities need not be done through discontinuing service provision for those who have services. It is advocated that those with service should continue to get services, while efforts are made to provide those without services with services that will one day be at the same level and quality as that of those who currently have and continue to have access to services.

4. Courtesy: Citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration. The behaviour and attitudes of public servants are required to be raised to the level of the best at all times and must always be monitored (WPTPS 1997:10).

5. Information: National and provincial government departments must provide the customers with full, accurate and up-to-date information about the services they provide and who is entitled to them. Transformed ways of communicating with the public are encouraged in order to accommodate those who can not read or

write, who cannot understand certain languages and/or are living in rural areas.

6.   Openness and Transparency: 'The public should be informed on how government departments are run, how well they perform, the resources they consume, and who is in charge' (WPTPS 1997:11).

7.   Redress: This principles requires a whole new approach to handling complaints by ensuring that all heads of department regularly and personally review complaints and how they have been dealt with. This review is to be done in terms of principles such as accessibility, speed, fairness, confidentiality, responsiveness, training and review.

8.   Value for money: Efforts need to be made to ensure that systems are put in place to assist the service delivery process to happen within a cost-efficient environment, and areas where savings can be sought need to be investigated.

To be in a position to meet the stipulations of the legislation, some municipalities have responded by employing more staff, transforming their organisations, as well as by changing their strategies to be able to address these responsibilities.

The uMgungundlovu District Municipality also reacted by attempting to transform itself, build better relations with its local municipalities, adopted a new organisational strategy in the form of an Integrated Development Plan (IDP), and hired more staff (albeit on contract because such positions are not in its organisational structure). However, the discussed changes did not include the amendment or review of the municipality's

organisational structure, especially on a regular basis, and this is believed to be affecting its service delivery initiatives.

3.2. <u>SERVICE DELIVERY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT</u>

The Municipal Systems Act of 2000 was formulated to guide municipalities in terms of systems that they need to put in place to be in a position to provide services adequately. This act guides municipalities on the step by step processes that they have to undergo to ensure efficient service delivery. Chapter 5, sections 23 and 24 of the Act prescribe that municipalities need to adopt a developmental way of doing business to ensure efficient service delivery. This includes community participation and cooperative governance as keys in the service delivery processes of the municipality.

Section 25 (1) of Chapter 5 of the Act states that:
'Each municipal council must, within a prescribed period after the start of its term, adopt a single, inclusive and strategic plan for the development of the municipality which:

a) links, integrates and coordinates plans and takes into account proposals for the development of the municipality;
b) aligns the resources and capacity of the municipality with the implementation of the plan;
c) forms the policy framework and general basis on which annual budgets must be based;
d) complies with the provisions of this chapter; and
e) is compatible with national and provincial development plans and planning requirements binding the municipality in terms of legislation.

Section 25 (2) of the same Act states that 'an integrated development plan adopted by a municipal council in terms of subsection (1) may be amended in terms of section 34 and remain in force until an integrated development plan is adopted by the next elected council'.

This section is crucial because it provides the main basis for the existence and operation of municipalities. It is therefore certain that the non-adherence of municipalities to these stipulations will result in failure to deliver efficient services. To substantiate this, the Municipal Systems Act of 2000 prescribes the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) as the main tool whereby service delivery can be obtained, especially if developmental decisions are to be as inclusive as possible of the community and other government role-players and stakeholders.

The Municipal Systems Act of 2000 further provides means through which municipalities can evaluate or assess their effectiveness and success in service delivery. To this end, Chapter 6, section 38 of the Act prescribes that municipalities need to establish a performance management system to monitor their performance in terms of their own strategies such as the Integrated Development Plans. This section further provides for the evaluation of the work done by the Municipal Manager and his senior managers as well as the political side of the municipal administration to be done as part of ensuring that means to deliver services efficiently are put in place. The Municipal Structures Act of 1998 provides the means through which such can be done in section 19 (2) where it states that 'municipalities should ensure that all necessary mechanisms that promote service delivery are put in place'. These mechanisms include organisational and service delivery mechanisms, as well as performance monitoring mechanisms such as a performance management system.

Failure to do this, as stated in section 106 of Chapter 10 of the Municipal Structures Act of 1998, will result in the MEC requesting information on the organisation's performance or an investigation of how such performance is done. These provisions commit the municipality, and all municipalities in the country, to put in place all necessary mechanisms to ensure that it is in a position to deliver services efficiently.

Further, section 77 of the Act provides municipalities with the authority to review/change mechanisms that they use to provide services by stating that: 'A municipality must review and decide on the appropriate mechanism to provide services when:

  (a) preparing or reviewing its integrated development plans;

  (b) a new municipal service is provided;

  (c) an existing municipal service is to be significantly upgraded, extended or improved;

  (d) a performance evaluation in terms of Chapter 6 requires a review of the delivery mechanism;

  (e) the municipality is restructured or reorganised in terms of the Municipal Structures Act,

  (f) requested by the local community through mechanisms, processes and procedures established in terms of Chapter 4; or instructed to do by the provincial executive acting in terms of section 139 (1) (a) of the Constitution.'

These sections prescribe that whatever mechanisms or processes that are required by the municipality to ensure that service delivery occurs, must be engaged in. Such mechanisms or processes could include the organisational structure, and the strategy and policies of the organisation.

3.3   MUNICIPAL POWERS AND FUNCTIONS

The Constitution of 1996 provides municipalities with the responsibility of service delivery and gives them authority to implement the stipulations of other national legislation such as the Municipal System Act of 2000. The Constitution provides for the provision of service delivery as one of the ways government can ensure that people's rights are satisfied. These stipulations of the Constitution are linked to local government legislation such as the Municipal Systems Act of 2000 and the Municipal Structures Act of 1998, which tend to dwell more on the responsibilities of municipalities.

On the same note, Section 19 (1) of the Municipal Structures Act of 1998 states that 'a Municipal Council must strive within its capacity to achieve the objectives set out in section 152 of the Constitution, and these are:

(1) The objectives of local government are:

    a) to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities;

    b) to ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner;

    c) to promote social and economic development;

    d) to promote a safe and healthy environment; and

    e) to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government.

(2) A municipality must strive, within its financial and administrative capacity, to achieve the objects set out in subsection 1.

In addition, the Municipal Demarcation Board informs municipalities of the powers and functions that they need to be responsible for to ensure service

delivery, by publishing their powers and functions in a government gazette on a regular basis. In some instances, the Demarcation Board asks municipalities which functions they would be in a position to perform and allocates such functions accordingly. However, the Demarcation Board has discretion in cases where both local and district municipalities have indicated that they would not be in a position to perform a certain function when such a function needs to be fulfilled.

The allocation of powers and functions and the determination of municipal categories and boundaries are among the reponsibilities of the Board. According to the Government Gazette on the determination of municipal categories (1998:2), 'the recent Constitutional Court judgement clearly stated that, in fulfilling its constitutional obligation to determine the boundaries of the categories of municipalities, the Municipal Demarcation Board must not only apply the criteria for determining municipal boundaries, but it must, of necessity, apply the criteria for determining when an area should have a particular category of municipality. Such necessity arises from the fact that the determination of boundaries cannot take place in isolation - it can only occur in relation to the boundaries of a specific category or categories of municipalities. Without determining the category of a municipality, the determination of a boundary becomes a meaningless exercise'.

Municipal powers and functions have changed since the transformation from regional and town councils to district and local municipalities as custodians of service delivery. This change also links with the category of municipalities in terms of how they gear themselves to perform or deliver services. Further, the change of types of authority has resulted in changes in responsibilities for service provision, such as area jurisdiction and financial capacity, which have to be fulfilled within certain parameters,.

In 1998, the Demarcation Board gazetted municipal powers and functions that the subject Municipality is expected to be responsible for in terms of service provision during the Council's term of office. The gazette prescribes what the responsibilities of the Council were and how the organisation should be tailor-made to promote or ensure service delivery. This gazette provided the basis for the type of functions that the District Municipality had to perform, as well as the legislative background of how and when it should be performing such functions.

On the same note, the Municipal Structures Act of 1998 also provides guidance on how different categories of municipalities should be structured, as well as the different services/functions that they should be responsible for. It should be noted that the structuring of municipalities that is prescribed by the Act is only in terms of the political aspect of municipalities, i.e. committees, and not on the administrative side, i.e. organisational structure or the filling thereof.

Chapter 2 of the Act also prescribes how a municipality can be established, and Chapter 3 deals with the composition, membership, operation and dissolution of municipal councils. Further, Chapter 5 of the same Act prescribes the powers and functions that are assigned to municipalities in terms of sections 156 and 229 of the Constitution. Of particular interest for the purposes of this research is the stipulation in section 83 (3) that:

> 'A District Municipality must seek to achieve the integrated, sustainable and equitable social and economic development of its area as a whole by:
>
>> (b) promoting bulk infrastructural development and services for the district as a whole'.

Implied in these provisions of the Act is the need to transform or regularly update the municipality's organisational structure, as it is one of the main tools required to ensure the successful implementation of the service provision mission.

Section 84 (1) (a-p) of the Municipal Structures Act of 1998 stipulates the type of powers and functions that district municipalities need to be responsible for. These functions have been separated from what local municipalities need to do. However, arrangements can be made for district municipalities to request their local municipalities to perform one or more of these functions. On the same note, district municipalities can be requested to perform functions of their local municipalities if the latter are not in a position to do it themselves.

Section 85 (1) and (2) of the same Act states that the MEC for local government can allocate these functions to either the district municipality or its local municipalities. In some instances, district municipalities that are considered to have capacity to deliver services efficiently tend to be given more functions, both of a district municipality and a local municipality nature, and this also applies to local municipalities. The point to note is that, where a local municipality function has been given to a district municipality over and above its normal district municipality functions, it is the responsibility of the district municipality concerned to keep itself in a position where it is able to provide such a function, as failure to deliver on the service is going to be the district municipality's problem and not that of the local municipality without capacity. The same is also true in terms of a local municipality that is given a district municipality function.

3.4. **SUMMARY**

The chapter has provided background on the different legislation and policies that influence the environment within which municipalities operate. The section has focused on a descriptive discussion of the prescriptions of local government legislation and policies and is concluded by the acknowledgement that any municipality that does not plan its service delivery initiatives according to the provisions of these legislations and policies will not be efficient and successful. As a result, municipalities are not in a position to decide which services to deliver or not when there is a wealth of legislatively binding stipulations that they are

required to adhere to in terms of their service delivery responsibilities. The effects, challenges and issues relating to the provisions of the discussed legislation and policies will be further analysed during the evaluation of the findings of the research that is done in the last chapter of this research project. Further, these legislative provisions have been used as the basis for the conclusions and recommendations that are made in the last chapter.

The next chapter describes the historical context of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality as well as how the Municipality promotes or inhibits efficient service delivery. The chapter also reviews the different organisational structures that were formed through the years in the organisation, illustrating how it has changed as the organisation and its leadership changed.

CHAPTER 4: CASE STUDY: THE uMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

4.   INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the background and policies of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality that have been formed over the past eight years, as well as how these promote or inhibit efficient service delivery. As it presents the status quo, this chapter is descriptive in nature and does not attempt to evaluate or make conclusions on the processes that the organisation has followed and is currently following. The chapter seeks only to describe the process and situation and evaluate how this has impacted on service delivery.

The chapter begins by presenting the organisational structures of the Municipality and its predecessor between 1998 and 2003. This period is divided into two distinct periods, one when the organisation was known as the Indlovu Regional Council until 1999, and the other when it became the uMgungundlovu District Municipality in the year 2000. The organisational structures over both periods will then be scrutinised in terms of their respective powers and functions. It is scrutinised in broad terms; looking at the whole organisation, as well as with specific reference to the Technical Department.

The eight year period has been selected because it covers the reign of both the uMgungundlovu District Municipality and its predecessor, the Indlovu Regional Council, hence information from both periods are used to make the necessary points. The chapter aims to review the different organisational structures that the municipality has had over this period in

order to illustrate how these evolved as the organisation, its leadership and strategy changed.

The discussion of the structures is firstly done on a general basis in order to lay the foundation for the argument put forward, and the larger part of the discussion focuses on the details of the structure, as it relates to the Technical Department. The chapter is concluded with an analysis of the type and extent of impact that these different organisational structures is having and may have had on service delivery.

4.1 <u>ORIENTATION</u>

The uMgungundlovu District Municipality is located in the KwaZulu-Natal province and is one of the ten district municipalities in the province. The Municipality covers an area of 9 186.18 square kilometres, which is divided into seven local municipalities, which are:

- uMngeni Local Municipality covers 1 568 square kilometres and has a population of 130 582;
- Mpofana Local Municipality covers 1 679 square kilometres and has a population of 25 815;
- Mkhambathini Local Municipality covers 916.91 square kilometres and has a population of 45 040;
- Richmond Local Municipality covers 1 226 square kilometres and has a population of 62 090;
- Msunduzi Local Municipality covers 649.27 square kilometres and has a population of 524 928;
- uMshwathi Local Municipality covers 1 924 square kilometres and has a population of 130 582; and
- Impendle Local Municipality covers 1 223 square kilometres and has a population of 36 706.

The population of the area is around 894 921 people, of different ages, educational, racial and economic backgrounds. The majority of the population of the District Municipality lives in rural and tribal authority areas that are not as well serviced as their more built-up or urban counterparts. A map to show the location of the District Municipality and the distribution of its local municipalities is given below as Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Map of uMgungundlovu District Municipality
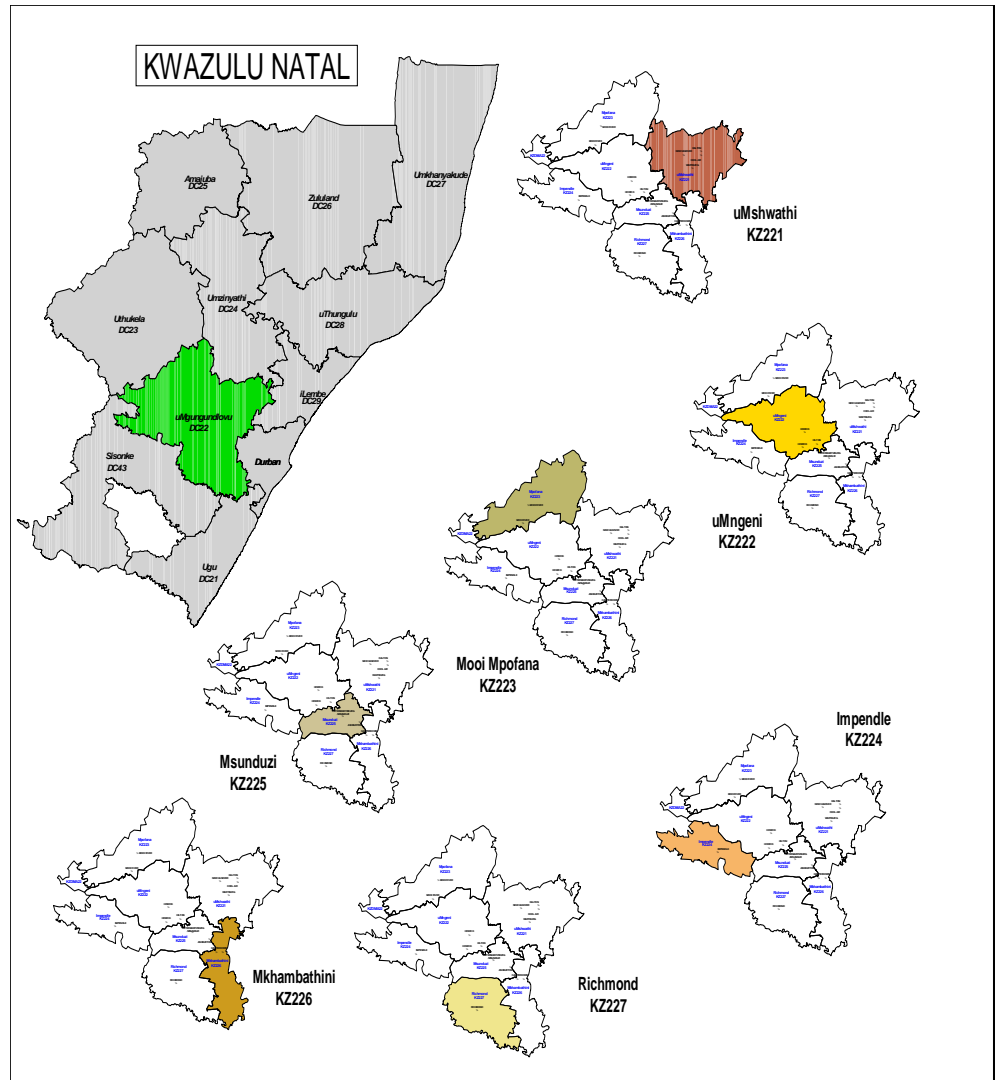
Prior to the establishment of district and local municipalities, the area of the current uMgungundlovu District Municipality was under the jurisdiction of the Indlovu Regional Council, which was formed when regional and town councils represented local government. The Regional Council was responsible for service provision in five sub-regions that covered a total area of 21 200 square kilometres, which were rural in nature. The details of the sub-regions that made up the Indlovu Regional Council are shown in the table below, as Figure 4.2.:

.

Figure 4.2. - Sizes of Sub-regions of the Indlovu Regional Council

Sub-region	Estimated population	No. magisterial districts	No. farming areas	No. tribal authority areas	No transitional local councils
1	540 013	4	8	20	6
2	637 818	3	8	7	5
3	223 082	3	8	8	3
4	325 154	3	9	10	4
5	59 953	6	0	0	3

4.2   HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF STRUCTURAL EVOLUTION

4.2.1. PRE THE YEAR 2000

To provide services to its area, the Regional Council had three departments, which were led by directors who reported to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the organisation, with only one department being dedicated to addressing community needs. The

departments were: the Finance, Administration and Technical Departments, which together had a total staff component of about 93. The Administration and Finance Departments had the largest number of staff, and their budgets were mostly used for operational and staff salary purposes. The Technical Department, on the other hand, had the smallest number of staff (24), whilst having the largest responsibilities in terms of service provision, as a line-function department.

The following are functions of the Regional Council, the majority of which were the responsibility of the Technical Department:

- roads upgrading
- community facility construction and maintenance
- water provision and maintenance
- town and regional planning
- building regulation
- waste management
- local economic development (IRC investigation report 2000:8-11).

Of the above mentioned functions, the Technical Department was responsible for all except local economic development, which was handled by the Administration Department.

A diagram of the organisational structure of the erstwhile Regional Council (Figure 4.3.) shows the type and number of staff that the organisation and the functions the staff was responsible for.

Figure 4.3: IRC organisational structure
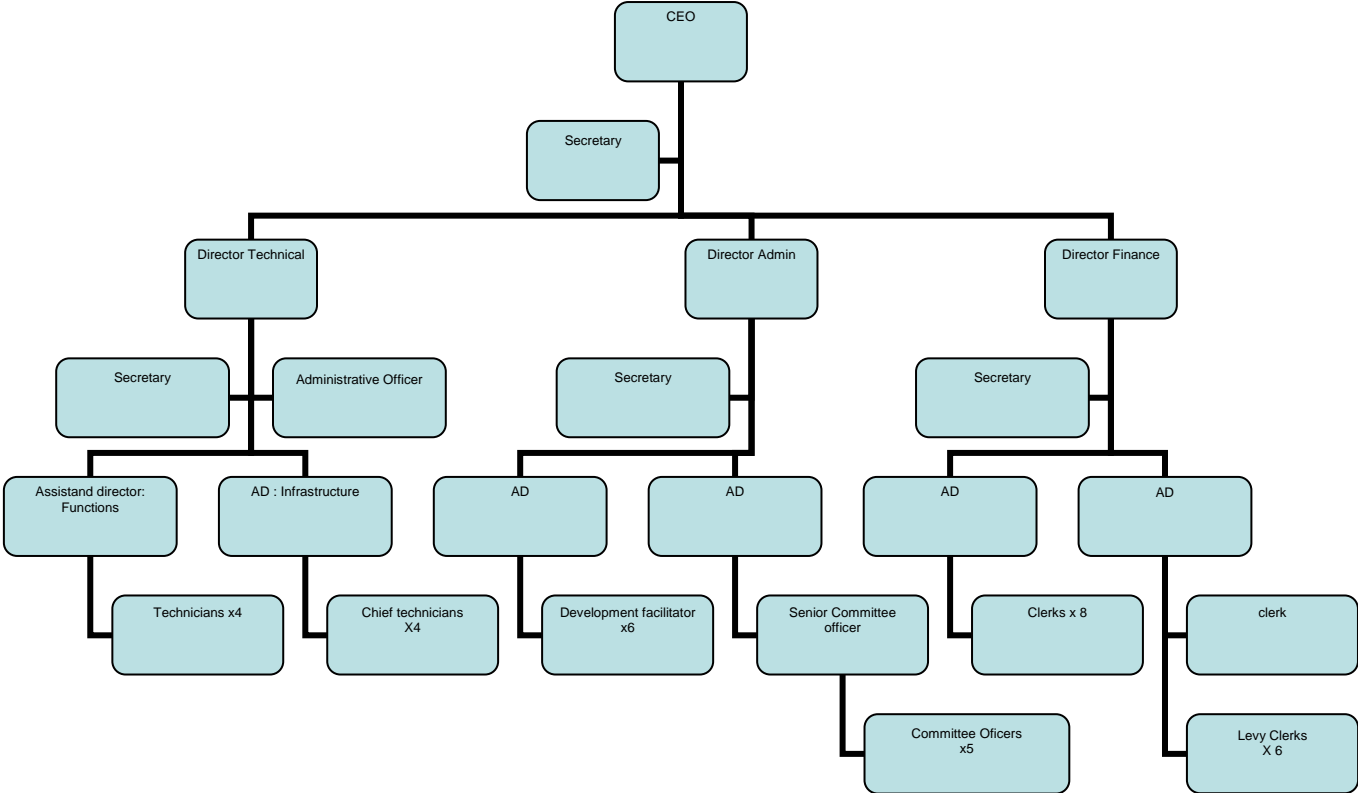
The Regional Council had numerous functions to deliver on, the majority of which had to be carried out by the Technical Department. From the above, it can be argued that the Technical Department was key and central to the very existence of the Regional Council, in that duties done by the other departments within the organisation emanated from and were tightly linked to work that was done by the Technical Department.

For example, the Finance department was mostly occupied with balancing funds which were spent by or had to be spent by the Technical Department, prepared explanatory reports for audit purposes on money that had been used for projects that were technical in nature. The centrality of the Technical Department is also evident in the fact that it had the biggest budget, most of which it managed to be utilised within any given period (IRC investigation report, 2000: 8-11).

To serve the community, the Technical Department worked according to requests it received from the communities at any given time, and the communities would apply for funding in respect of any projects, which the department had to budget for and deliver on. The work of the Department was divided according to major and minor rural projects. Minor projects were those that did not exceed fifty thousand rand (R50 000), with anything beyond that falling within the major projects category (Indlovu Regional Council investigation report 2000:38). As a result of a lack of policies, the decision to implement minor projects was given to the CEO, whilst that of major projects was the responsibility of the Executive Committee of the Regional Council.

At a strategic workshop that was held by the organisation's management and political leaders at the beginning of 1998, delays in delivery and the size of the personnel of the Regional Council were identified, amongst other issues, as a problem in terms of effective service delivery. In discussing the way forward, capacity building, in the form of staff training, was identified as a short term need, but was not necessarily linked to the organisational structure or its implications for service delivery.

In fact, the workshop documentation and transcripts reveal that the focus of the workshop was mainly on identifying aspects that the Regional Council needed to focus on, which was skewed more towards operations than anything else (IRC Strategic Workshop Document 1998).

As much as the size of the personnel of the Regional Council was identified as a problem, a solution to address this was not mentioned in the way forward that the workshop resolved on. It is a cause for concern that the need to amend the Regional Council's organisational structure was neither identified nor mentioned as an issue at the workshop.

Further, the appointment of staff was never carried out according to any agreed upon criteria, since all powers rested with the then Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the organisation. In terms of this arrangement, whenever the need arose for a professional or other position in the organisation, the CEO would prepare a report to the Executive Committee of the Regional Council and motivate for the engagement of a relevant person to fulfil the service. This meant that no records were kept in terms of staff hired and the criteria used for such, as well as the links between newly created

positions and existing positions. Moreover, the decision to fill positions that became vacant following resignations also fell within the powers of the CEO, so there were no records of a needs analysis to motivate for the staff that were hired (Mr Mthethwa, Human Resources Manager: personal interview 11 May 2006).

According to Mr Mthethwa, when he was appointed he had to motivate to restructure the organisation by creating all relevant organisational policies, including an organisational structure which was neither adopted nor used as a reference for future appointments. He argues that the need to review the organisational structure never took centre stage, since the organisation had not been used to this and had only just been introduced to relevant and acceptable human resource practices.

4.2.2. The Technical Department

The department had one director, who managed the department with the assistance of two assistant directors who respectively handled Functions as well as Infrastructure and Public Works. The Assistant Director for functions was responsible for the following:

- municipal works
- roads and storm water
- schools sanitation

In terms of the organisational structure (see Figure 4.3), three senior technicians and one technician were responsible for implementing these functions. Their work was divided according to the specific work that needed to be done to cover the area of the Regional Council. The allocation of work was as follows:

- Senior Technician 1: roads and storm water
- Senior Technicians 2 and 3: municipal works, such as water, solid waste and construction
- Technician : schools sanitation.

On the other hand, the Assistant Director for Infrastructure and Public Works managed the following staff:

- Manager for Public Works (this was a contract position funded by the Department of Works, the incumbent handled issues pertaining to Public Works only).
- Four chief technicians who were employed to perform the monitoring function on work done by the other technicians throughout the Regional Council's area.

According to Mr. Wells, who was one of the technicians at the time, these chief technicians ended up working with them because there was not much work within the monitoring section. He clarifies that it was for this reason that the technicians and their work were reallocated according to sub-regions so that they could provide specific services to the different sub-regions.
(Mr Wells: Water Manager: personal interview, 11 May 2006)

4.2.3. Post the year 2000

The uMgungundlovu District Municipality was formed in the year 2000 when the previous types of local government were disestablished and new types, in the form of municipalities, were

introduced. The Municipality replaced the erstwhile Indlovu Regional Council which had been responsible for providing services in five sub-regions, and formed seven local municipalities, as described above in section 4.1.1. of this chapter.

In 2002, the Municipal Demarcation Board requested municipalities to complete an assessment questionnaire on the type of powers and functions that they would be in a position to perform, in order to assist the Board with the delegation of powers and functions. The District Municipality, with its seven local municipalities, met and prepared council resolutions regarding the type and number of functions that they would be in a position to perform. This task was completed by all seven local municipalities and communicated to the Demarcation Board in the same year.

In the same year, the District Municipality initiated the formation of a technical advisory team to investigate the capacity of the family of municipalities to address the issue of powers and functions. Amongst other aspects to be investigated, the document states that the team was to 'audit the current financial resources for the current service delivery materials and human/capital resources, and to identify potential resources (financial, material and human)' (Terms of Reference for the Technical Advisory Team, 2002:01).

4.3. <u>POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF uMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY</u>

The uMgungundlovu District Municipality's organisational structure has been developed internally by the organisation to guide and allow the municipality to perform at its best as far as

efficient service provision is concerned. The structure contains the office of the municipal manager at the top of the hierarchy, to which reports the following four departments:

- the Technical Services Department;
- the Financial Services Department;
- the Community Services Department; and
- the Corporate Services Department.

Of these departments, only the Community Services Department has an appointed head of department, while the rest have municipal officials who are acting in the positions of head of department. Below the head of department positions are various executive managers who have different managers reporting to them.

Below is a diagram of the municipality's organisational structure showing the type of departmentalisation that is in place, as well as highlights where the Technical Departments features. The organisational structure of the District Municipality is illustrated below as Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4: uMgungundlovu District Municipality's organisational structure
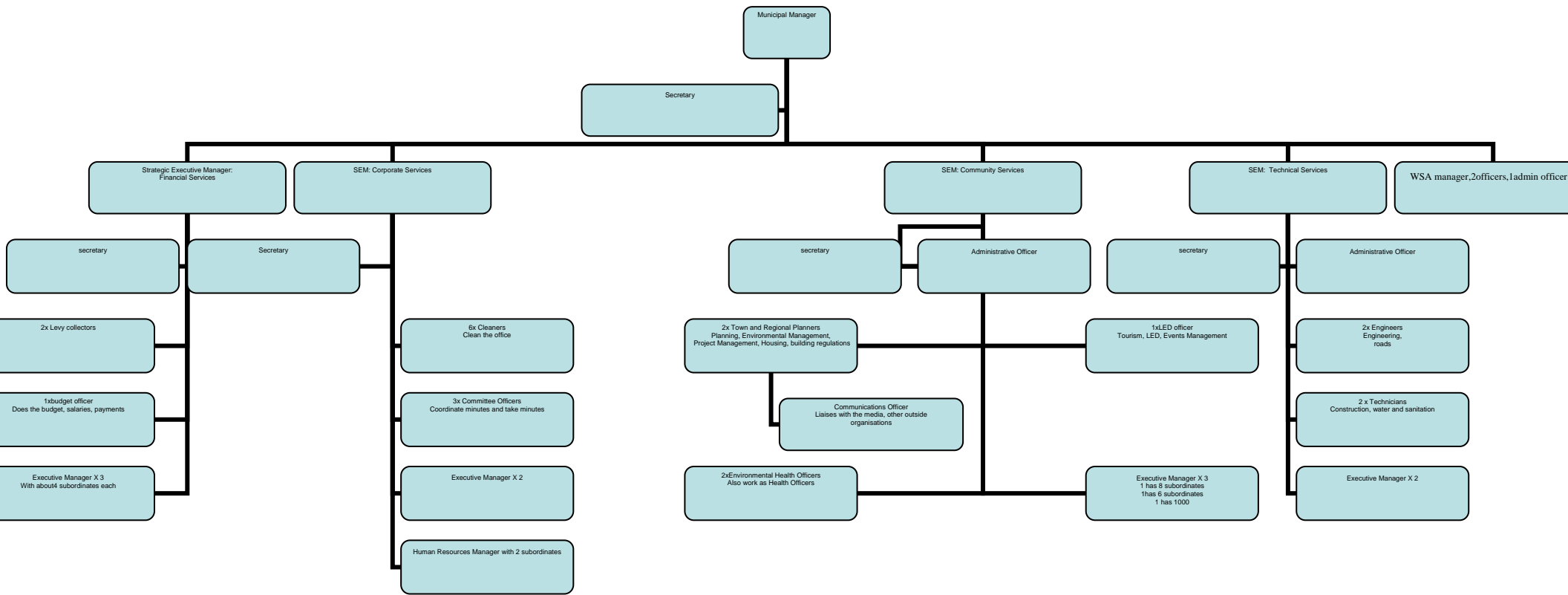
Focusing on the Technical Department, the structure reflects nine positions that have to deal with all the functions that the Municipality is obligated to be responsible for, and these have already been mentioned in the earlier sections of this chapter. From the titles of the positions, it is suggested that the incumbents of the positions, whether existing or not, are or will be expected to perform duties that relate to their titles, e.g. the incumbent of the position of roads technician will perform duties relating to roads.

Over and above its district municipality power and functions, the district municipality was also allocated some local municipality functions which had to be performed in the areas of the relevant local municipalities. The uMgungundlovu District Municipality was allocated the following local municipality functions:

- building regulations in four out of its seven local municipalities;
- local tourism in all its seven local municipalities;
- fire fighting in six out of its seven local municipalities;
- municipal planning in five out of its seven local municipalities;
- municipal public transport in all its local municipalities;
- storm water management systems in built-up areas in four out of its seven local municipalities;
- cemeteries, funeral parlours and crematoria in three out of its seven local municipalities;
- municipal roads in two out of its seven local municipalities; and
- refuse removal, refuse dumps and solid waste disposal in three of its seven local municipalities (KZN Provincial Gazette 2002).

Some of the local municipalities were also allocated some of the district municipality's functions and this was done as follows:

- three local municipalities were allocated the airports function;
- three local municipalities were allocated the public works function; and
- three local municipalities were allocated the markets function.

To confirm the functions that will be performed by all the local municipalities, the uMgungundlovu District Municipality undertook to prepare a service delivery plan that would 'allocate or divide the functions between itself and each of the seven local municipalities. Because of the small size of most of the local municipalities, the uMgungundlovu District Municipality ended up taking on many of the functions because it was believed that, even though human resources, amongst other things, was not adequate, the Municipality had adequate financial resources to acquire more staff if the need ever arose.

As a result of this process, the Municipality was given the following functions:

- building regulations in four out of its seven local municipalities;
- local tourism in all its seven local municipalities;
- fire fighting in six out of its seven local municipalities;
- municipal planning in five out of its seven local municipalities;

- municipal public transport in all its local municipalities;
- storm water management systems in built-up areas in four out of its seven local municipalities;
- cemeteries, funeral parlours and crematoria in three out of its seven local municipalities;
- municipal roads in two out of its seven local municipalities; and
- refuse removal, refuse dumps and solid waste disposal in three of its seven local municipalities (KZN Provincial Gazette 2002).

Some of the local municipalities were also allocated some of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality's functions and this was done as follows:

- three local municipalities were allocated the airports function;
- three local municipalities were allocated the public works function; and
- three local municipalities were allocated the markets function (KZN Provincial Gazette 2002).

In terms of the powers and functions allocated to the subject District Municipality through the Municipal Structure Act of 2000, the Technical Department is directly responsible for eight out of sixteen powers and functions. One of the functions, that of compiling the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) of the municipality is done in conjunction with other departments, under the leadership of the IDP manager, who is the Municipal Manager of the Municipality. This makes the IDP the ninth function for which the Technical Department is responsible.

Moreover, of the eight local municipality powers and functions that were allocated to the uMgungundlovu District Municipality through a Provincial Gazette published by the Demarcation Board, five of those functions are done by the Technical Department, and these are:

- municipal public transport
- storm water management systems in built-up areas
- refuse removal, refuse dumps and solid waste disposal;
- cemeteries and crematoria
- Municipal roads (KZN Provincial gazette 2002).

It would therefore seem that, from the size and scope of these functions, the Technical Department has the largest responsibility in the municipality and as such would be expected to be capacitated enough to handle such a mammoth task. These powers and functions have been formulated for execution by established municipalities that have policies, organisational structure, budget and organisational strategy in place to guide their functioning. It therefore becomes a challenge for a municipality that does not have relevant systems in place to provide the expected services to acceptable standards.

In 2003, the powers and function issue was revisited when a review of the allocation was once again carried out, leaving the majority of the functions in the hands of the Technical Department of the District Municipality.

4.4. **IMPACT OF ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE ON SERVICE DELIVERY: REFLECTIONS OF KEY PERSONNEL**

The following perceptions have been gathered from the interviews with the staff and management of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality:

The management and staff have a different understanding of issues pertaining to organisational structure in terms of its use, meaning, challenges and implications. The staff had a lot of aspects of organisational design and structuring that they said they did not know about, while the management had a good understanding of all the main aspects of organisational design and structuring processes, most of which relate to the theory and legislation that was been presented in Chapters two and three of this research project. In most cases, staff only mentioned issues of protocol and no other functions of organisational structures.

One of the main problems identified by staff is that management does not involve them in issues or processes of organisational design and structuring, hence they have many issues that they do not know about. Further, most of the staff mentioned that they are not aware of what the main objective of the Municipality are and therefore do not prioritise their work to ensure that these objectives are met.

For both the erstwhile Indlovu Regional Council and the current Municipality, the organisational structure was formulated before its strategy without any basis that relates to the direction that the organisation aims to take; hence the Municipality is now finding it difficult to bring the strategy and structure together, since the foundation of their formulation is flawed. The staff reported that the structure of the Municipality is populated by a majority of staff that do not belong to the line-function department and who therefore do not prioritise line-function work. It was also gathered that the dominant view of the respondents is that the

majority of staff believes that there is the strategy on the one hand and their work on the other, and management must deal with work relating to the strategy, while general staff deal with their 'normal' work;

The staff also mentioned that during the IRC time, some of them were moved around from one position to another, regardless of whether or not they were able to perform in their new positions, or the negative impact this may have had on service delivery. Furthermore, management mentioned political principals as influential in the direction that the Municipality is going and the decisions that are taken, including organisational structure review. Management emphasised that the politicians do not attend to issues relating to budget and strategy in time, and do not treat these as a single entity. The management was of the opinion that it is the separation of these aspects that causes problems in terms of the alignment of aspects that are critical for service delivery.

4.5.   **SUMMARY**

The chapter has presented the history of the formation of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality as well as the dissolution of its predecessor, the Indlovu Regional Council, as part of the background for understanding the current state of affairs at the Municipality. The chapter has also provided the two organisational structures that were inherited from the erstwhile Indlovu Regional Council by the current uMgungundlovu District Municipality. More than anything, the chapter has shown the type and amount of work that the Technical Department is responsible for, in relation to the number of staff that it has at its disposal to perform these functions.

The next chapter presents the research process and research subjects that have been consulted for information on the research, as well as an analysis of the findings of the research survey. The chapter provides the analysis of issues for

the municipality to consider, as well as laying the foundation for the conclusions and recommendations that will be given in the last chapter of this research.

CHAPTER 5:   ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

5.   __INTRODUCTION__

This chapter introduces the questions and findings of the research interviews that were conducted with certain staff members of the Technical Department, certain members of management as well as certain general staff members of the Municipality, because of the significance of their input to the research project. The majority of the staff from the Technical Department that were interviewed were selected because they had been with the disestablished Indlovu Regional Council and have stayed through to the reigning period of the current uMgungundlovu District Municipality, so their input is very valuable. The members of management on the other hand, were selected for their central role in the formulation of the organisational structure, as well as other general and related processes linked to directing the organisation, its growth and functioning.

The chapter provides an analysis of the research findings and presents these in terms of different subheadings. The first section of the chapter is on the organisational structure and design, which presents the views of the research subjects in relation to this heading, the link that is made between the findings and the theory that was presented in chapters two and three of this research project. This is followed by a section that focuses on an analysis of the findings with regard to how the findings contribute towards a better understanding of the process issues that were experienced during the organisational design stage. The chapter further provides an analysis of the findings in terms of how the organisational structuring and design issues of the municipality impact on service delivery. Where appropriate, this discussion is linked to the theoretical background that was presented in Chapters two and three of this research in order to support the argument

that is being put forward. The chapter concludes with a summary of the issues discussed in the chapter.

5.1. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND DESIGN

The technical staff revealed a limited understanding of what organisational structures and their functions are and this is in contrast to the understanding that management has on the same issue. Management reflected an advanced understanding of organisational structures as tools that are used to drive the organisation. It was noted that management, especially the Municipal Manager, has a broader understanding of what organisational structures are and what their functions are, and this understanding of the issue is close to the description of organisational structures that is provided by Brown and Moberg (1980:91), who argue that 'structures assist or guide the accomplishment of the organisation's goals'. The staff, on the other hand, argued that organisational structures are there to show protocol lines and position hierarchy and did not link this to the functioning of the organisation.

The research respondents were asked questions that relate to their knowledge, awareness, understanding and exposure to issues and processes that the erstwhile IRC engaged in and that the Municipality engages in, pertaining to issues of organisational structures and design (the interview questionnaires are attached as Annexure 1 and 2). The main finding on this point is that, considering the fact that both organisations had pyramidal structures, these staff members were placed at too low a level to be considered significant for the processes of formulating and designing an organisational structure.

The technical staff mentioned that the flat pyramidal structure was appropriate for their circumstances during the IRC days, although the

appropriateness became questionable when the organisation started expanding under the management of the District Municipality. They argued that the management used their discretion, as given by their power, to exclude these staff from important processes and the structure that they formulated or proposed to the Executive Committee excluded staff at low levels from the process. A conclusion reached by the staff is that service delivery was not improved because their views, as operational staff with firsthand experience and information on issues that hinder or have the potential to hinder service delivery, have been and continue to be excluded in the organisational design and structuring processes. Through the years, management have kept the staff excluded from crucial processes without realising their significance to processes that would enhance service delivery.

This view is supported by the power-control argument put forward by Robbins and Barnwell (2002:294) which states that those in power tend to select organisational structures that will, to the maximum degree, maintain and enhance their control. This is supported by the management structures that exist in the organisation, as well as the reporting lines that guide the way work is done. This element is also reflected in the fact that only management drives the organisational design and structuring process and communicates directly with political principals who are the decision-makers.

For example, during the IRC times, the staff reported to a manager, the Assistant Director, who further reported to a Director. This span of control made it difficult for the staff to contact the Director directly for solutions on any problems that they may have had. Further, the structure did not allow the Director to communicate directly with the staff, as it required their manager to communicate messages to the staff. According to the staff, the span of control further inhibited their manager (the

Assistant Director) from acting on their problems of being overworked and, to some extent, unqualified to do some of the work, because he also had to get feedback from the Director, who further reported to the Municipal Manager. All the staff argued that this span of control limited their chances of advocating any changes because of the extent to which they were excluded from decisions that affected how they did their work. The staff concluded that they were at the mercy of the Assistant Director and Director to put forward their cases to the top decision-makers.

These findings are supported by Craythorne (1993:255), who argues that specialists are usually dissatisfied with the access that they have to the top-decision-makers within their organisation. He argues that central to the issue of organisational structuring and design is the issue of span of control and type and level of access that specialists can have to top-decision-makers. Again, the proper management of the span of control can positively impact on the progress of work that is done by specialists, and on the overall service delivery of the organisation.

All the technical and general staff respondents stated that they had never been informed about initiatives that the municipality was planning to engage in and they had never been requested to contribute to these processes pertaining to the organisation design and structuring. The Municipal Manager argued that, in an ideal situation, every staff member should be consulted in the process of forming the structure to ensure buy-in into the process and decisions which are taken thereafter. Further, the Municipal Manager argued that, as a result of the lack of decision-making and limited staff consultation environment in the organisation, there have been no job reviews for staff and not all staff are informed of the measures in place to ensure service delivery. The argument on what influences structure becomes central in the understanding of the structures that the organisation has had since its early days. Robbins and Barnwell

(2002:262) argue that there are five influences of structure; size, technology, strategy, environment and power. In terms of the environmental influences, it is understood that dynamic environments have more influence than stable ones, and since the environment within which local government operates is dynamic, because of the continuous restructuring and transformation of local government, it can be deduced that the structure of the organisation is linked to or heavily influenced by its environment.

As much as it can be deduced that the environment has been an influence on the erstwhile IRC's structure, as well as that of the current Municipality, the influence of power should not be underestimated. In administrative terms, management are in power while in political terms, the political principals are in power. In the case of the erstwhile and current local government organisations, the power of management takes a central role in that management drives all processes that are to be followed by the staff.

Moreover, management have the responsibility of drafting the organisational structure and presenting as well as motivating it to the political principals. More often than not, management will motivate for changes that they are in support of because they will be able to respond to questions from their political principals, as opposed to changes that they are not in support of. Further, because of their positions, management can exercise their powers by excluding or including members of staff in different processes that relate to organisational design and structuring. For example, although the general staff were not involved in the organisational structuring processes, the union representatives were involved, and sometimes management used their discretion not to involve the union, for reasons not disclosed to the researcher by the management.

This has been confirmed by the staff who, when asked if the organisations had any basis for the structures that they formulated, responded that there were no basis. The staff continued to say that the management of the organisations allowed and continue to allow the environment to direct or dictate the way the organisations' structure and design are done. Further, the staff argued that, ideally, the uMgungundlovu District Municipality is supposed to be guided by all the determinants of structure, as discussed in chapter two of this research project. However, the staff argued that this is not so since the most dominant determinant of structure during the Indlovu Regional Council time, which continues under the current Municipality, is the environment and this is problematic. The staff argued that the current size and future anticipated size of the organisation should be considered when formulating and designing an organisational structure.

An example was given of the fact that as the Regional Council, there were Transitional Councils that were dependent on the human capacity of the Regional Council for their service delivery initiatives. Moreover, as the District Municipality, the Local Municipalities within it are also dependent on the capacity of the District Municipality because it has more resources to acquire the required capacity whenever it is needed. One of the current problems relating to the fact that the organisation is small in size and a reviewed organisational structure can encourage its much needed growth and expansion is that the Local Municipalities depend on the uMgungundlovu District Municipality to meet some of their service delivery requirements.

On this point, the Acting Head of Department of the Technical Department mentioned that out of the seven Local Municipalities, four do not have fully fledged Technical Departments that can do Technical work. He argued that these Local Municipalities always request the Municipality to second staff or 'lend' them staff that would run their Technical

Departments so that service delivery can happen. It should be noted that the relationship between the uMgungundlovu District and its Local Municipalities is enforced and encouraged by legislations such as the Municipal Systems Act of 2000, where it stipulates that government entities should work together to ensure that service delivery is not compromised.

On the other hand, the management argued that power is another determinant of structure that is currently guiding the way the Municipality formulates and designs its organisational structure. They contend that the power that their political principals have also directs the way the management do their work. They argued that the political principals have the power to make changes to any structural proposals that are presented to them, and the decision to review the structure always needs to be permitted by the political principals, so their power as managers is limited to certain decisions.

The fact that the majority of the staff were not even aware that the erstwhile IRC had an organisational structure and were never involved in design processes is a concern, when analysing the organisation in terms of Hilliard's (1995) argument. Hilliard (1995:09) argues that, management need to sell the organisational structure and its processes to all staff to ensure the smooth implementation of these initiatives, as staff will be more receptive of changes that they are aware of and have been part of initiating. He stresses that all staff members of an organisation need to be part of the organisational structuring and design process, and their contributions must be requested to ensure that staff feel like members of the organisation's team, know and understand decisions that are taken, and are prepared to implement management's decisions that they have contributed to. Analysing the exclusion of the staff from processes related to organisational structuring and design by the management of the

erstwhile and current organisation, this could not have counted in management's favour, but would rather have counted as one of the discouraging factors for staff.

Further, according to the management of the Municipality, meetings where organisational structuring and design are discussed also become a forum for management to discuss and debate the type of staff that they require in their departments. Staff members interviewed expressed the opinion that excluding low-level staff from these processes prevents the management from understanding problems that the staff is facing before motivating for any changes, which results in inappropriate changes being made. This also reduces the chances of getting the staff to assist the management in coming up with adequate solutions to the problems. The staff further argued on this point that the management tends to adhere very quickly to requirements that are made by national government in terms of the Municipality's functions and structure. For example, the national government declared the District Municipality a Water Services Authority (WSA) which had to take over staff and the function of water provision and management from the Water Board, which has had the function and staff for years. This meant an expansion to the current structure of the organisation because the legislation required that a unit comprising a manager and various staff members be formed to deal with the water function, as well as acting as the head office for the staff who were housed at the satellite offices.

In response to this, the Municipality created, independently of the organisational structure review process, a unit that comprised five positions. The issue is that the management employed the staff for this unit and located the unit within the Office of the Municipal Manager, thus making it completely independent of and almost superior to the other functions that are fulfilled by the Technical Department, which also

included the water function in its responsibilities. In this case, there was no consideration given to the possibility of work duplication, public or consumer confusion, staff confusion and clashes resulting from the new distribution of work, both internally and externally from other stakeholders. The staff concluded that, as a result of having the WSA in the Municipal Manager's office, the WSA has been separated from other functions of the two line-function departments, i.e. the Technical and Community Services Departments. The problem with this separation is experienced by the operational staff that the management excludes from critical organisational design and structuring processes. Reference is made to the organisational structure shown in Figure 4.4.

This argument is supported by Craythorne (1993:255), who argues that 'if an organisation is allowed to grow in a haphazard, unplanned and uncoordinated way, the flow of work will be confused, resources will be wasted, it will be difficult to control costs, and service standards are likely to be unsatisfactory because of bad planning or lack of planning. Another example mentioned by the staff is that, during the IRC days, the Technical staff managed more than two hundred projects each and could not give proper attention to all the projects. As a result of a lack of a forum where the staff could present their problems and suggest solutions, the lack of capacity of the Technical Department and need to strengthen the organisational structure was never picked up as an issue by management. This is supported by the fact that in 2002 the IRC had a strategic planning session to discuss how service delivery could be improved. The session discussed issues of size of the whole organisation, not the Technical Department in particular, and never the issue of the organisational structure. Further, the session never related the issue of organisational size to that of the structure and service delivery, and this is considered to have been a flaw by the researcher.

The management of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality also argued that their sessions of organisational structuring and design tend to be guided by what is legislatively required (the environment) as opposed to what is needed by the organisation to improve service delivery. It is from this viewpoint that the writer of this thesis argues that, as much as the organisation's structure has evolved over time, there is no link with service delivery, nor has there been any improvement since the structure has been amended, particularly in terms of the legislative requirements. The management has also mentioned that the organisational strategy, the IDP, is not being used to guide the changes that should be made in the organisational structure.

The staff also argued that their non-involvement in management issues also influenced the type of assignments that they were given, and in most cases, their ability to carry out the assignments was linked to their understanding of the assignment, in light of the overall objectives of the organisation. The staff mentioned that, in most cases, management tended to make decisions that were not influenced by consideration of the impact on service delivery. For example, the technical staff argued that, when the Indlovu Regional Council was disestablished, the uMgungundlovu District Municipality re-allocated the staff to new responsibilities which were not linked to what they were qualified in.

As a result, the staff could not do what was expected of them since they were incorrectly assigned. The staff reported that they were specialists who concentrated on specific parts of the technical work during the IRC reigning period, and this changed when the uMgungundlovu District Municipality came into power: The District Municipality made the technical staff stop being specialists in what they had been doing for years and made to them generalists. For example, one of the staff members who used to specialise in roads and buildings, was moved to school sanitation,

community halls and crèches, as well as other work that he had never done before.

The problem with this is that the staff had been trained and employed in certain divisions and were not de-briefed and retrained to be in a position to effectively manage their new responsibilities. On this note, the staff reported that they were stretched and could not apply their skills and attention to all responsibilities effectively. This problem of affected performance is discussed by Hilliard (1995:09) as one of the main problems that cause failure in local government initiatives, and this is turning out to be true in this case. Further, the expansion of the work that was done by the staff made it more difficult for them to effectively apply their skills and efforts. This relates to the fact that during the IRC period, the staff were not coping with managing the two hundred projects for which they were each responsible, and adding to their responsibilities only magnified the problem.

On the other hand, one of the technicians reported that he was moved from technical work to administrative work where he became the Fleet Control Officer. This move to the new section was not accompanied by a replacement of the technician within the Technical Department, which created a gap in the already under-capacitated Department. Linked to the incorrect use of human resources is the fact that a qualified and highly skilled staff member was moved from a position that required to be done by a highly skilled and qualified incumbent to a position that did not require much skill or qualification. In this instance, the ability to perform at the same level at which the organisation had been performing when the technician was in his old position was compromised, as was the level of effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery efforts.

This supports Hilliard's (1995:09) argument that the inefficient managerial style and incorrect use of human resources can lead to human resources to being unproductive. It can therefore be argued the inability to realise that moving the Technician from a demanding and skill-specific position to a less demanding generalist position shows that the management were using the staff incorrectly, and were managing the work and staff inefficiently. This is thought to have compromised service delivery because staff were neither trained nor retrained for the positions that they had been moved to. The technician who became a Fleet Control Officer also reported that he was not given training for his non-technical position, apart from a three-day introductory conference on Fleet Control. Further, the staff member was neither trained to return to his old department nor trained to fulfil his new responsibilities, that of cemeteries and crematoria, especially after having had a long break and considering that this was a new field altogether, both to him and to the organisation. Further, the staff added that through the entire period of the erstwhile Indlovu Regional Council, no job reviews were done, so staff's work piled up without any changes to their employment contracts or formal job descriptions. The Municipal Manager of the District Municipality added that the District Municipality has also never done any job reviews since it came into being, which means the problems inherited from the erstwhile Indlovu Regional Council are only getting worse.

Hilliard (1995:09) argues that staff who are moved to work within environments that are different from those they were working in before need to be retrained in alignment to changes that may be implemented in their organisation and working environment, and states that failure to retrain staff can negatively affect service delivery.

On this point, the argument by Hilliard (1995:09) that staff within a flat-pyramidal structure needs to be re-oriented when changes in functions are

introduced seems to be critical. However, he mentions that the problem with re-orientation and retraining is that it is considered time-consuming and costly. The question then becomes: How costly is inefficient service delivery against the cost of training staff? Would it be cheaper to let things stay the same, as opposed to training staff to be able to handle new responsibilities and improve service delivery? To support this argument, the municipal type of local government is based on the foundation of service provision, which would mean that things that would improve service provision should always be opted for.

These questions are critical, since they show that the actual costs of having inappropriate means of service delivery can turn out to be greater. Moreover, they show that the cost for staff training should never be ignored and termed time-consuming as it forms the basis for the successful change or transformation of an organisation, both in terms of ensuring continued and improved service delivery, and highly motivated and maximally performing staff members.

These arguments show that the existence of staff and the availability of human and financial resources do not guarantee success in terms of service delivery. Other factors, such as the incorrect use of the existing human and financial resources, an inclusive decision-making environment, organisational strategy and structure also play a significant role. The significance of a reviewed organisational structure becomes clear, in that regularly reviewing the organisational structure would have shown the management of the erstwhile IRC and current UMDM that changes need to be made to ensure that the organisation is in a good position to provide services. The review of the organisational structure would have also helped the Technical Department staff voice their problems and alert other managers, other than their Head of Department, to the fact that they are short-staffed and should not be moved around to other sections because

such a move will impact on the efforts of the organisation to deliver services successfully.

According to the technical staff, the problem was worsened by the failure to review the organisational structure upon commencement of office by the management of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality. The District Municipality has been operating on a structure that it inherited from the erstwhile Regional Council, which had been formed to address the requirements and needs of the IRC at the time.

This structure was influenced by the powers and functions of the organisation, and legislation tended to influence the positions that were provided for within the structure of the organisation, and was not based on any practical foundation. Further, the uMgungundlovu District Municipality's organisational structure of 2005 reflected new positions when compared to the structure of 2003, but the sense of where the organisation wanted to be is not reflected. These organisational structures do not provide the reader with any sense of direction that the organisation wants to take, and which department is the driving force or line-function department since the trend of having support functions bigger than the line-function department is still continued. On this note, Flynn (1993:170-180) argues that before organisational structures are developed, it is important to be clear on which aspects of the organisation are dominant, with support and control functions clearly demarcated and understood.

Flynn (1993:171-173) further provides guidance as to what needs to be done before organisational design is done, and states that it is important to understand the responsibilities of the organisation, its clients, level of services and budget implications and allocations. He argues that very rigid control over budgets can make service delivery insensitive to the needs and wishes of the users. Related to this is the problem that is raised

by the technical staff in relation to the bureaucratic processes that have been put in place by the support departments, which end up hindering instead of facilitating service delivery.

For example, one of the Technical staff stated that whenever contractors need to be hired for work to be done, the procurement section provides them with many internal processes that they have to undergo before the actual appointment can be made. This leads to a situation whereby work is never done within the required time-frames and this is sometimes costly. The technician quoted a case where a contractor could not be appointed because a few people had responded to an invitation to tender, and most of them were not suitably qualified and did not have the required experience in the field. The need to re-advertise the invitation to tender cost the Technical Department in terms of time and a potential loss of a good contractor that they had identified from the applicants who had responded to the first advertisement.

Another problem quoted by the technical staff is that the procurement section at the Finance Department applies the rule of getting three quotations from potential service providers very rigidly and this hinders their work progress. They argued that there are specialised services that are only provided by specific service providers, and this does not always allow them to obtain the required three quotations. As a result of the 'three-quotation rule', the technical staff experiences delays and this negatively affects service delivery, resulting in unhappy consumers. The staff concluded that the work of line-function departments, such as the Technical and Community Services Departments, ends up being controlled by the rules of support departments such as the Finance Department. Related to this point, is Mintzberg's (1979:399-460) argument that the point of reviewing organisational structures is to solve old problems that the old organisational structure could not solve.

In 2001, when the uMgungundlovu District Municipality formulated its strategy, it did not link it to the structure; hence it is difficult to implement the strategy. Learned and Sproat (1966:23) quote Simon where he supports this argument by stating that strategy tends to be limited by structure if it is formulated after structure. This supports the argument of this research project which states that strategy should come before structure and not structure before strategy.

To support this, it is crucial to inspect the Municipality's strategy, the Integrated Development Plan, which lists many projects that the organisation is responsible for implementing. It has been noted that the majority of the projects do not have allocated personnel to implement them because there are so few staff members and the time for implementation of the projects is limited. Most of the projects do not reflect any names of staff responsible for them, but only reflect the name of the head of department, who cannot practically implement them because he is not at the operational level.

Further, the respondents argued that organisational structures need to be linked to the strategies of the organisation, and a common point between the staff and management is that they all mentioned that the strategy of the organisation needs to be done before the structure. It is on this note that the Municipal Manager stated that the organisational structure needs to be informed by the organisational strategy; otherwise, service delivery will be affected negatively (Personal interview 12 September 2006).

In terms of the responses on the weaknesses of the organisational structure that was formed in 2003, as well as the revised version in the years following that, the staff put forward the following arguments:

- The structure does not always correspond with the strategy;

- Staff are not properly informed on structural changes and their implications;
- The structure is top heavy;
- The largest departments of the organisation are support departments which end up taking a central role in the organisation without supporting the main line-function department, which is the Technical Department. This negatively impacts on the work of the Technical Department.
- The organisational structure sometimes does not include the right people for the job that needs to be done, especially since it was formed to accommodate the existing staff instead of accommodating the criteria of the organisation's strategy when the District Municipality came into being;
- Increased human resources to ease the workload of the current staff are planned for but not fulfilled. Most of the critical positions that have been provided for in the structure are not occupied;
- There is no link between the line-function department (the Technical Department) and the support departments. For example, there are no set procedures on how to expedite the work of the line-function department since support departments view their own work as independent from the work of the line-function department;
- There is no link between work that staff is currently doing and the stipulations of the organisation's strategy, the IDP;
- Staff in the support departments does not understand what the business of the Municipality is; hence they see themselves as independent of the line-function department's responsibilities and as existing predominantly to further their own work, without realising that their work is not independent of that of the line-function department.

The interviews were concluded by asking what changes can be made to improve service delivery, to which the staff and management responded as follows:

- The structure needs to be reviewed;
- The Technical Department needs more staff;
- The existing staff in the whole organisation needs to be work shopped on the vision of the organisation and given procedures of how to work in a way that helps the Technical Department to accomplish its goals; and
- Regular reviews of the structure and strategy need to be carried out.

5.2.   PROCESS ISSUES IN ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Khandwala (1977:483-486) argues that organisations have superstructures and infrastructures, and superstructures refer to the way organisations are departmentalised. He argues that the superstructure is what tells us at a glance how the organisation is geared to meet its tasks and represents the top management's strategy.

Looking at the superstructure of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality, it is not easy to understand what the objective of the existence of the Municipality is. At first glance, the support departments (the Corporate and Finance Departments) are large and have many units that are responsible for functions that are internal services, and they therefore look like the main drivers of the organisation. The superstructure does not reveal the level of involvement that the Technical Department has in terms of the functions that it is responsible for. For

example, there is a water manager position that reports to an executive manager within the Technical Department.

On the other hand, the Office of the Municipal Manager has an Executive Manager of Water Services Authority (WSA) who reports that directly to the Municipal Manager. At a glance, the organisational structure tells us that the Municipality has something to do with water issues, but does not show the distinction between the water involvement of the WSA staff and the staff of the Technical Department. These positions are a direct result of the problems that were mentioned in section 5.1. of this chapter, where it was stated that the Municipality has inherited positions from its predecessor and has created more positions based on its legislative mandates, without making an attempt to reconcile the two to come up with a working organisational structure that would allow it to implement its strategy and deliver services successfully.

It is on this point that scholars such as Khandwala (1977:483-486) advocate that organisational structures need to be as clear as possible and as reflective of the organisational strategy as possible. Hilliard (1995:09) further argues that internal organisational structures are, amongst other things, some of the factors causing a decline in public sector performance. Using the water function example, the organisation cannot expect the different units/offices to perform on the same function without providing a common ground for the two units that are working on the function. Further, considering the *Batho Pele* principle that states that the public can complain if their needs are not met by public institutions, it becomes difficult for the public to report the problem or be assured of a response within a given time because there are two units to deal with the problem as well as two heads of department.

The example of having two units dealing with water issues can also be interpreted as incorrect use of human resources, especially because lines are not clear as to which aspect of water each of these units deals with. Moreover, in terms of the performance management requirement, as stipulated in the Municipal Systems Act of 2000, it would become difficult to make one head of department account for water issues, and it is equally difficult to separate the issues when accounting in terms of performance auditing. Further, from a management point of view, the separation of the function makes the water function difficult to manage, because one official can always blame the other if things are not done properly and in time, making it difficult to trace incompetence and negligence. A review of the organisational structure would be useful because it would help the organisation keep its activities coordinated, pursue its goals and have a focus in the midst of diversity (Khandwala 1977:483).

It is argued that this division of the function leads to lack of coordination of the work, which further affects service delivery because there may be duplication of work and negligence of some aspects of the work because the one unit will expect the other to perform a certain function. Moreover, in terms of the stipulations of the *Batho Pele* principles, the Constitution and the Municipal Systems Act, which advocate the provision of services to people, from the public's point of view, water provision is a success if there is water in the taps or tanks and not only when there are units responsible for water provision. Having to understand that the tank is provided by another section and the water connection is done by another is difficult for the public, and trying to make them understand why this is, can only make the public think the organisation is incompetent. Further, service provision is not measured according to officials and their efforts - it is measured against the complete product, which is a service that has been delivered to the public. So, even if the one section can provide the

water tank, if there is no water in the tank, the efforts of the other section cannot be recognised because water has not been provided to the people.

The development of the organisational structure was not done in relation to the requirements of the organisational strategy, and the water function and the positions that have been allocated to it is a case in point. The Municipal Manager confirmed that the Municipality is currently treating the organisational structure, the budget and the strategy as separate items that can be done at different times. He mentioned that this should not be the case, but measures to change the situation have not been put in place. He says this separation tends to lead to work or decisions being taken on some of the aspects and not on others, and this negatively affect service delivery. In his own words, the Municipal Manager argued that deciding on the IDP and budget and waiting to decide on the structure at a later stage while expecting service delivery to commence immediately, is like building a car and not putting wheels on it and expecting your staff to drive around in the meantime while you decide on which wheels you will put on the car (Interview 12 September 2006).

The Municipal Manager also mentioned that decisions pertaining to organisational structural amendments are not only made by management but also by their political principals. He argued that management recommend changes to be made on the organisational structure and motivate these to the Executive Council, who has the power to support or object to the changes, or even suggest their own changes. This point links to the power-control argument that is put forward by Robbins and Barnwell (2002:262), who argue that there are various groups that hold power in organisations, and these groups always use these powers to further their own ends. It should be mentioned that, as much as management is controlled by the Executive Committee, they also control the staff and the way work is done at an administrative level. So the fact

that they have not attempted to motivate for the review of the organisational structure means that the management has not exercised its own powers within an area where they have control.

The management confirmed that the current organisational structure has been inherited from the previous organisation, and that they realise that the structure makes it difficult to move staff around or remove redundant positions that do not have a role in promoting the vision of the organisation. The management further confirmed that the expansion of the organisational structure that has come into effect over the past years has been motivated on a case-by-case basis to the Executive Committee, using the legislative requirement as the basis for the motivation. The Municipal Manager accepted that such an expansion would need to be done using the vision and strategy of the organisation to direct the location of these legislated positions or units, in order to make sure that the structure becomes effective.

Examples of legislatively required positions that have been created at the Municipality include that of the Performance Management Officer, the Internal Audit Unit and the WSA Unit. The Municipal Manager motivated the existence of these new positions by stating that the organisation had to have these to comply with legislative requirements. However, it is argued that complying with legislative requirements does not solve the problem of service delivery because even the newly-created units or positions need to be tailor-made to fit within the structure of the organisation and support the vision and strategy, in promotion of effective service delivery. Brown and Moberg (1980:95) argue that organisations change their organisational structures for three reasons;

- ▪ to improve the performance of the organisation;
- ▪ to fine-tune the organisation; and

- to improve the total organisation performance.

The fact that the uMgungundlovu District Municipality has been expanding its organisational structure for reasons other than the three mentioned above, is evidence that the organisation has no particular basis that it uses to formulate its organisational structure. It can therefore be concluded that the organisation has allowed the environment to be the main determinant of its structure, and this tends to limit the focus and effectiveness of the organisation.

5.3. ISSUES RELATING TO THE IMPACT ON SERVICE DELIVERY

The Municipal Manager reported that in 2001, when the District Municipality formulated its strategy, the IDP, it did not link it to the structure; hence it is difficult to implement the strategy with the current structure. This is especially so because it had been designed to meet requirements of the previous institution and has not been refined to meet the needs of the current organisation, given its legislative powers and functions.

When the Municipality formulated its strategy in 2001, this process was not followed by a structure packaged to facilitate the implementation of the strategy. For example, the strategy reflects many projects that are meant to be carried out by the Technical Department. The strategy reflects projects that will be done, when they will be done and the type of funding that will be used to implement the projects. The IDP reflected more than two hundred projects, more than 85% of which were supposed to be done by the Technical Department. The majority of these projects was meant to be done immediately after the strategy was adopted by the Full Council of the Municipality in 2001. As a result of the shortage of staff to drive and manage the projects, some of them ended up being delayed for later years.

Moreover, most of the projects that were mentioned in the 2001 strategy were actually programmes with projects that could not be once-off events but continued even after the review of the 2001 strategy. This raises a concern that these are prioritised projects that are really needed by the community served by the organisation. So, at the end of the day, the prioritisation of projects by communities becomes impossible to implement at the agreed time, which then contributes to the negative impression that communities have developed about the Municipality's strategy and its implementation.

In relation to this, it is argued that the municipality has battled to get its strategy implemented in ways that satisfy its service delivery responsibilities because the tools required to achieve this have not been put in place. For an example, the 2001 strategy reflected a project called a Multi-Purpose Community Centre (MPCC), a Presidential project that needed to be done as a matter of urgency as soon as funding had been sourced. The project began in 2002 with the investigation of a site and the construction following soon thereafter because the District Municipality had enough funding to proceed with the implementation. As a result of the shortage of staff in the Technical Department, one person was allocated to manage the whole project. The technical staff managed the project with the assistance of staff from the Community Services Department, with external support provided by the Government Communications and Information Systems (GCIS).

The construction was completed in the middle of 2005, but no electricity and a constant supply of water had been provided to the centre. According to minutes of the last meeting of the MPCC Steering Committee that was held in July 2006, the project has become an emergency that the President has made a special enquiry on because of the delays, and so every effort

needs to be made to speed up its completion so that it can begin operating, before it can be launched.

The delays have prevented tenants, who are various government departments and parastatals, from moving into the centre to provide the much-needed services to the community of the area. Moreover, when the project was initiated, it had been estimated that it would be fully operational by the end of the third year, which is 2003, and problems that resulted in the delays were linked to the shortage of dedicated staff that would monitor the progress and manage the project, and be in a position to act quickly to solve problems.

In response to the non-provision of water at the centre, Mr. Nothnagel (Interview 12 September 2006) reported that the District Municipality is faced with service delivery problems as a result of the inadequate organisational structure. He argued that the structure of the District Municipality reflects the water functions in two units of the organisation, which are in different offices. There is the WSA unit that deals with water planning, bulk water supply and connections, and the Technical Department that deals with capital projects. There is no position or unit that is dedicated to water operations, which would deal with ensuring that all projects have water connections and are running smoothly.

Mr Nothnagel further reported that the split in terms of the location of the water function in different units makes the provision and management of water difficult. He emphasised that, as much as the Technical Department attempts to respond to water issues, it is not mandated and capacitated to handle such a big responsibility. In turn the public is affected because the internal organisation and structuring prevents successful service delivery.

Another problem that has been highlighted by Mr Nothnagel is that the District Municipality should at all times have adequate capacity when compared to its local municipalities so that it can provide them with assistance to facilitate service delivery. He mentioned that out of the seven local municipalities within the District Municipality, four do not have the capacity to provide technical functions and rely on the District Municipality to help them. On this point, he mentioned that three of the four local municipalities had submitted written requests to be seconded with technical staff who would work as technical managers/directors on an acting capacity as well as handle the technical work at an operational level, while the fourth had made such a request telephonically.

He emphasised that, as much as the District Municipality realises the need to assist these local municipalities, it is not capacitated enough to release any of its staff members to work at the local municipalities on a full time basis, even if it is only for a short period of time. He emphasised, as did the rest of the technical staff who were interviewed, that the failure of the District Municipality to assist its local municipalities negatively affecta service delivery at the local level. The need for municipalities to work together and assist each other to provide required services is supported by the Municipal Systems Act of 2000 and the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997), which stipulate the promotion of cooperative governance.

These laws and policies prescribe that whatever mechanism or process that is required by a municipality to ensure that service delivery occurs must be done or engaged in. Such mechanisms or processes could include the organisational structure, the strategy of the organisation, as well as the policies of the organisation that would facilitate efficient service delivery. A point to note is that, as much as the review of organisational structures

is prescribed, it is not emphasised as much as the importance of reviewing the organisational strategy.

However, linking with the organisational design theory discussed in Chapter two, it should follow that whenever a strategy is reviewed, the organisational structure should also be reviewed to ensure successful implementation of the strategy. Within the Municipality's context, failure to review the strategy and structure has resulted in a negatively affected service delivery programme. Further, the failure to review the organisational structure can be equated with a contravention of the stipulations of the various laws and regulations that have been quoted.

The Municipality continues to exist and operate without formulating its policies and processes to deal with the changing environment within which it operates. The deduction of this research is that, although functions of the municipality have changed over the years, its internal policies and processes have not been changed to enable the Municipality to appropriately address the changed responsibility. This lack of flexibility is inhibiting the Municipality from appointing the required staff to satisfactorily provide the required services.

Further, the staff argued that another problem that contributes to the slow progress in terms of efficient service delivery is that their work is hindered by processes that have been put in place by the support departments such as the Finance Department. They argued that the procurement procedures and related processes have not been tailor-made to facilitate the work of the line-function department. For example, they state that they are always delayed when they have to hire contractors to do work for the municipality since their work is not prioritised and decisions are never made quickly enough.

On this note, the time lapse between the municipality's formulation of its strategy in 2001 and the formulation of its organisational structure in 2003, reveals that the organisation has been operating with an inappropriate staff component who most probably, taking everything into account, were predetermined to fail in delivering services. Linked to this predetermination to failure, is the fact mentioned by the staff that they never received any form of debriefing or training when the organisation changed from being a Regional Council to a District Municipality.

Moreover, as much as the staff argued and the management realised from IDP reviews that delivery is affected, the management has not made any major attempt to increase the ability of the organisation to improve service delivery. Neither has there been any attempt to promote a different way of structuring the organisation by moving away from being top-heavy to adopting a more practical design. This would assist all the staff of the organisation to understand what their role is and how much effort they need to invest to ensure that service delivery happens within a less bureaucratic system. On this point, the Municipal Manager argued that management has attempted to change the situation, but the political leaders have not made the necessary decisions for this to happen.

5.4.   SUMMARY

The chapter has presented the views and responses of staff and management in terms of their understanding of service delivery and the link to the organisational structure. The findings have been presented and will be used as the basis for the overall conclusions and recommendations that will be presented in the next and final chapter of this research project.

The main question that was set out to be asked and answered at the beginning of the research is: What is the role of the uMgungundlovu

District Municipality's organisational structure in light of its service delivery responsibilities? To this end, it has been discovered that the Municipality's organisational structure hinders efficient service delivery, and the reasons for this have been discussed in this chapter. It has further been discovered that at the Municipality, legislation and political principals influence the organisational structure that has been designed without necessarily being linked to the strategy of the organisation, and effectively, the organisation's service delivery goals and objectives. The interview respondents have pointed out that both the management of the IRC and the current Municipality excluded and continue to exclude operational staff from organisational design and structuring processes, and this has made the staff feel like outcasts, who as a result end up neither understanding nor supporting management's decisions.

A conclusion reached from these findings is that structure should follow strategy, and whenever strategy is reviewed, so should the structure. Further, in organisations that get involved in a restructuring process, they should start their planning and restructuring process on the assumption that no staff exists, to ensure that the process is as objective as possible and that the structure and other processes are made to serve the best interest of the organisation and not that of individuals.

The next chapter presents a discussion of the various conclusions and recommendations that can be reached on the topic of the research project, as well as possible directions for future research.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6. <u>INTRODUCTION</u>

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations that can be made in the light of the theory, discussions, investigation and findings of the research. The background to the research problem, as well as theory on organisational structures and their design have been used to assess the organisational structure of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality and its impact on service delivery. The main argument put forward is that structure should follow strategy since strategy provides or should provide guidance as to how the structure of an organisation can be formulated as well as populated, to maximise chances of an efficient service delivery environment. Chapters two and three provide the theoretical and legislative background to issues of organisational structuring and design, and have laid the foundation for the conclusions and recommendations presented in this chapter.

This chapter provides an account of the extent to which the research has achieved its goals and objectives, the problems and challenges encountered, gaps and unanswered questions. The chapter begins with a summary of the findings of the research and an analysis of its implications, followed by a discussion of the different processes that are involved in organisational development, design and structuring, and concludes with recommendations that can be adopted by the organisation. The recommendations include other aspects of the topic which can be investigated further.

6.1. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The investigated problem relates to the link between the structure of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality as it has evolved over time, and its impact on service delivery as per the responsibilities of the organisation. The description and investigation of the problem date as far back as the reigning period of the organisation's predecessor, the Indlovu Regional Council, in an attempt to provide a detailed background to the problem.

It was noted that the uMgungundlovu District Municipality inherited its structure from the erstwhile Indlovu Regional Council, which had formulated its structure to suit its service delivery responsibilities. It is therefore argued that the Municipality should have reviewed the organisational structure as soon as it came into power, to ensure that it reflected the number and calibre of staff and staff relations that are needed to handle its specific service delivery responsibilities, as its powers, functions and strategy, as well as its leadership and management had changed.

6.2. SERVICE DELIVERY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There are various laws and policies that guide the provision of services by local government bodies, and these have to be used by municipalities as guiding and authority-providing documents for the work that they need to do. These laws and policies have been made at national level regarding the type of functions that municipalities are responsible for in terms of ensuring service delivery in their areas, while also stating repercussions for municipalities that fail to deliver services they have been allocated.

The thesis has described and analysed legislation and policies that have influenced the environment within which Municipalities operate and formulate their organisational structures, as well as the relevance of these laws and policies to the

discussion of the research problem. The discussions of policies include the analysis of the White Paper on Transforming Service Delivery, which has been formulated to provide a framework and practical implementation strategy for the transformation of public service delivery. This White Paper guides public service delivery institutions on how they can transform and improve their service delivery efforts in order to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the way they deliver services. The policy proposes the transformation of the public service through the promotion of eight *Batho Pele* principles, which are:

Consultation: This principle requires that the public be consulted on the type, quality and level of service they require so that they are given the services they need. This principle promotes a move away from the top-down approach to service delivery to a bottom-up type of approach, as stipulated by the Municipal Systems Act, Act No. 32 of 2000.

Service standards: The public needs to be informed about what level and quality of service they are going to receive, so that they know what to expect and can complain if they do not receive it. Linked to this is the stipulation that the public should be able to hold public service institutions responsible for failure to deliver on their promises. The White Paper on the Transformation of Public Service Delivery (1997:9) stipulates that service standards must be set at a level that is demanding and realistic, which means that these standards must reflect a level of service which is higher than that currently offered, but which can be achieved with dedicated effort and by adopting more efficient and customer-focused working practices. The Municipal Systems Act of 2000 particularly enforces the provision of levels and standards of services in its stipulation that Integrated Development Plans must be done and must be accompanied by a Performance Management System to monitor progress on the level of service delivery.

Access This principle stipulates that citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are entitled, and that targets should be set to ensure **that** access is continually increased for people without particular services. Previously disadvantaged groups are meant to be prioritised for service delivery in order to close or reduce service delivery gaps between those with services and those without.

Courtesy: Citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration. This clause motivates for the relevant training of staff and monitoring of progress in terms of their attitude towards and proper treatment of the public.

Information: Government/public institutions must provide their customers with full, accurate and up-to-date information about the services they provide and who is entitled to them. Transformed ways of communicating with the public are encouraged in order to accommodate those who cannot read or write, who cannot understand certain languages and/or are living in rural areas.

Openness and transparency: The public should be informed on how government departments are run, how well they perform, and the resources they consume and who is in charge.

Redress: This principle requires a whole new approach to handling complaints by ensuring that all heads of department regularly and personally review complaints and how they have been dealt with. This review is to be done in terms of principles such as accessibility, speed, fairness, confidentiality, responsiveness, training and review.

Value for money: It is argued that efforts need to be made to ensure that systems are put in place to assist the service delivery process to happen

within a cost-efficient environment, and areas where savings can be made need to be investigated.

Further, the Municipal Systems Act of 2000 guides municipalities in terms of systems that they need to put in place to be in a position to provide services adequately. This Act guides municipalities on the step-by-step processes they have to undergo to ensure efficient service delivery. This is mentioned in Chapter 5, sections 23 and 24, where it is prescribed that municipalities need to adopt a developmental way of doing business to ensure efficient service delivery. This recommended way of doing things includes community participation and cooperative governance as keys to the service delivery processes of the municipality.

Section 25 (1) of Chapter 5 of the Act prescribes the period within which municipalities should formulate their strategic plans and what these plans should contain, as means for ensuring efficient service delivery. This section of the Municipal Systems Act of 2000 is quite crucial, because it provides the main basis for the existence and operation of municipalities. It is therefore certain that the non-adherence of municipalities to these stipulations will result in failure to deliver efficient services. To substantiate this, the Act prescribes the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) as the main tool through which service delivery can be obtained, especially if developmental decisions are to be as inclusive as possible of the community and other government role-players and stakeholders.

The Act further provides means through which municipalities can evaluate or assess their effectiveness and success in service delivery. On this note, various sections of the Act prescribe the formulation of a Performance Management System and Integrated Development. On the other hand, the Municipal Structures Act of 1998 provides the means through which municipalities can promote service delivery, by promoting the formulation

of mechanisms that are reviewed regularly. The Act specifies that failure
to do this will result in the MEC requesting information on the
organisation's performance or an investigation of how such performance
appraisal is done.

6.3. THE CASE STUDY OF THE UMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

This section illustrated the background and policies of the Municipality that have
been developed over the past eight years, as well as how these promote or inhibit
efficient service delivery. This section is a descriptive account of the status quo,
which begins with a presentation of the 1998 and 2003 organisational structures
of the municipality and its predecessor, and scrutinised them in terms of their
respective powers and functions.

The municipality's organisational structure is scrutinised in broad terms: looking
at the whole organisation, as well as with specific reference to the Technical
Department. This process is divided into two distinct periods: one when the
organisation was known as the Indlovu Regional Council until 1999 and the other
when it became the uMgungundlovu District Municipality in the year 2000. The
eight-year period has been selected because it covers the reign of both the
uMgungundlovu District Municipality and its predecessor, the Indlovu Regional
Council; hence the information for the two reigning periods is used to make the
necessary points.

6.3.1. The uMgungundlovu District Municipality

The uMgungundlovu District Municipality is located in the KwaZulu-
Natal province and is one of the ten district municipalities in the province.
The Municipality covers an area of 9186.18 square kilometres, which is
divided into seven local municipalities.

The population of the area is around 894 921 people of different ages, educational, racial and economic backgrounds. The majority of the population of the district municipality lives in rural and Tribal Authority areas that are not as well serviced as their more built-up or urban counterparts. A map to show the location of the District Municipality and the distribution of its local municipalities is attached as Figure 4.1.

6.3.2. <u>The Indlovu Regional Council</u>

Prior to the establishment of District and Local Municipalities, the area of the current uMgungundlovu District Municipality was under the jurisdiction of the Indlovu Regional Council, which was formed when Regional and Town Councils represented local government. The Regional Council was responsible for service provision in five sub-regions which were rural in nature and covered a total area of 21 200 square kilometres,. The Regional Council was divided into five sub-regions of different sizes, which were made up of magisterial districts, farming districts, Transitional Local Councils and Tribal Authority areas.

To provide services to its area, the erstwhile Regional Council had three departments led by directors who reported to the Chief Executive Officer of the organisation, with only one department, the Technical Department dedicated to addressing community needs. The three departments were: Finance, Administration and Technical Departments, which together had a total staff component of about 93.

The Administration and Finance Departments had the largest number of staff, and their budgets were mostly used for operational and staff salary purposes. The Technical Department, on the other hand, had the smallest number of staff (24), whilst as a line-function department having the biggest budget and greatest responsibilities in terms of service provision.

The Regional Council was responsible for functions including road upgrading, community facility construction, water provision and maintenance, town and regional planning, building regulation, waste management, and local economic development. Of the above-mentioned functions, the Technical Department was responsible for all except the local economic development function, which was handled by the Administration Department.

The IRC was aware that there were delays in service delivery, but only planned on improving capacity-building, which was not linked to the organisational structure. Documentation and transcripts of a strategic workshop held in 1998 reveal that the focus of the workshop was mainly on identifying aspects that the Regional Council needed to focus on, and the focus of the strategic workshop was skewed more towards operations than anything else (IRC Strategic Workshop Document 1998). The IRC also had no set processes, no systems or criteria for the appointment of staff and as a result, most positions were created and motivated for by the Chief Executive Officer on an ad hoc basis.

6.3.3. **The Technical Department**

The structure of the Technical Department indicates nine positions that had to deal with all the functions that the Municipality was responsible for. The Department was managed by a Director, who was assisted by two Assistant Directors who respectively handled Functions as well as Infrastructure and Public Works. The assistant directors had operational staff ranging from general to senior technicians, who were allocated work according to the functions of the Municipality. Further, the Assistant Director for Infrastructure and Public Works also had chief technicians as subordinates, and they performed the monitoring function on the work that was done by the technicians of the Department.

6.3.4. Post the year 2000

The uMgungundlovu District Municipality was formed in the year 2000 when the previous types of local government were disestablished and new types, in the form of municipalities, were introduced. In 2002, the Municipal Demarcation Board requested municipalities to complete an assessment questionnaire on the type of powers and functions that they would be in a position to perform in order to assist the Board with the delegation of powers and functions. The allocation of functions was done in consideration of the submission by the Municipalities. As a result, the uMgungundlovu District Municipality was allocated some local municipality functions, as well as district municipality functions, which included, amongst others; building regulations, fire fighting, refuse removal, municipal roads, municipal planning, storm water management and municipal transport planning. On the other hand, some of the Local Municipalities were also allocated some of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality's functions, i.e. airports, public works and markets.

In terms of the allocated Powers and Functions allocated to the District Municipality through section 84 (1) of the Municipal Structure Act of 1998, the Technical Department was directly responsible for eight out of sixteen (16) powers and functions, and these are functions b, c, d, e, f, g, h, l and n. One of the functions, that of compiling the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) of the Municipality, is done in conjunction with other departments, under the leadership of the IDP manager, who is the municipal manager of the Municipality. This makes the IDP the tenth function for which the Technical Department is responsible.

Moreover, of the nine local municipality powers and functions that were allocated to the district municipality through a Provincial Gazette published by the Demarcation Board, five (5) of those functions are

carried out by the Technical Department. Thus, the Technical Department has the largest responsibility in the municipality, and as such would be expected to be sufficiently capacitated to handle such a mammoth task.

6.4. **FINDINGS**

The findings of the research are as follows:

- Management and staff have a different understanding of issues pertaining to organisational structure in terms of its use, meaning, challenges and implications;

- The understanding that management has of organisational structure is more closely aligned to the theory that was discussed in chapters two and three of this research project, while that of staff is far from this;

- Management does not involve staff in issues relating to organisational structures and their design, and the staff representative who is involved by management in the discussions does not hold regular meetings to inform staff of what management is thinking and planning;

- As much as the staff representative is involved in the process of formulating organisational structures, staff views are not always invited, or even when these are requested, views are not offered by staff;

- The organisational culture has always been that management makes decisions and staff apply the decisions taken without questioning them, hence most of them argued that there was nothing much they could do to influence the organisational structure since it was a management's responsibility;

- The job descriptions and titles of positions do not reflect what has to be done, do not guide the staff in their focus and do not meet the service delivery needs of the organisation;

- Most of the staff are not aware of what the main objective of the municipality is, and therefore do not prioritise their work to ensure that these objectives are met;

- For both the erstwhile IRC and the current Municipality, the organisational structure was formulated before its strategy, without taking into account the direction that the organisation aims to take; hence the Municipality is now finding it difficult to bring the strategy and structure together, since the foundation of their formulation is flawed;

- The structure is populated by a majority of staff who do not belong to the line-function department, and who therefore end up not prioritising line-function work;

- The dominant view from the respondents is that there is strategy on the one hand and their work on the other, and management must deal with work relating to strategy, while general staff deals with their 'normal' work;

- As a result of the calibre of staff at the municipality, work procedures that have been put in place slow down the pace and efficiency of work that the line-function department is responsible for, and at the end of the day, the whole organisation's performance is affected;

- Political principals do not always make the required decisions relating to organisational structures, the budget and strategy in time, and do not treat these as whole. The resulting separation of these aspects causes problems in terms of alignment of aspects that are critical for service delivery;

▪ Job descriptions and titles of positions do not reflect what has to be done, do not guide the staff in their focus, and do not meet the service delivery needs of the organisation.

It is therefore concluded that it is critical for the Municipality to change its organisational structure to be aligned with its powers and functions, so that employees that are involved in service delivery could be employed and their work prepared and allocated as such. The fact that the organisation's structure was formed before its strategy was in place, and the fact that the annual review of the strategy excludes review of the structure, exacerbates the problem.

To address the above-mentioned organisational structuring problems, it is recommended that:

▪ The organisation initiates the process by holding an explanatory workshop for all its staff members to ensure that they all understand each other's roles as well as the vision of the organisation. This should not be a once-off event, but should occur at least every quarter, in order to accommodate new staff and amendments to the focus of the organisation;

▪ The organisation needs to formulate processes that ensure that work activities are better coordinated and that the line-function department becomes the driver of the organisation;

▪ The structure should be informed by strategy at all times, and so should its population. The organisation should employ some of the key line-function department's staff on a contract basis, with attractive packages and renewable contracts for positions that would exist only for as long as particular functions are the responsibility of the

Municipality. This will help the Municipality reduce the number of redundant staff in case of changes in the functions, while promoting a culture of relevancy: that all staff hired must be relevant and the work that they do must also be relevant to the organisation. This will also reduce the chances of moving staff around to areas that they are not experts in, as well as reducing the current problem whereby the majority of staff is focusing on other work and not on the priorities of the organisation. This will also reduce overcrowded offices occupied by permanent yet redundant staff, who cannot be retrenched. This is costly to the organisation as they earn very attractive packages.

▪ There needs to restructure the organisation by forming a structure on the basis or assumption that there is currently no staff, so that it can be objective and not serve to accommodate existing staff. This will ensure that its design is in line with the vision and responsibilities of the organisation, and through this system, it would be easier to place staff in appropriate sections. The Municipal Manager and his senior managers will carry out this task since their employment is on contract and it coincides with the term of the political principals. ;

▪ There should also be a performance or service delivery cluster type of staffing system that could be a combination of adhocracy and professional bureaucracy. In this way, staff could be grouped according to their responsibilities, so that each team or cluster has a complement of all staff required to carry out a particular job. This could be permanent or could be changed as and when necessary.

For example, the cemeteries and crematoria function entails doing a needs analysis to determine the extent of the need for cemeteries, and the investigation of land, legal, environmental, engineering and other issues. This means that this team would need the following staff:

> ➢ An engineer or / and technician to do all the technical work;
>
> ➢ A town and regional planner;
>
> ➢ A finance clerk to process the advertising, the claims and the payments, basically procure secure services;
>
> ➢ A manager to manage the team or unit

- The organisation must also ensure that job descriptions and job reviews are regularly carried out in line with the review of the structure and strategy. This should be linked to the promotion policy, performance management policy or system, so that performing staff can be rewarded while those who are battling can be motivated and assisted. The organisation needs to put in place human resources policies which provide clear guidelines for staff, e.g. the staff would need to know when they qualify for promotion or how they can qualify for promotion.

  The Municipality needs to ensure that its staff is regularly informed of critical aspects or decisions that management needs to take. This will help them feel like an important part of the organisation and crucial to the success of the organisation, so that they can direct their actions towards ensuring the success of the organisation. Further, following from the described legislative stipulations, it would be expected that the Municipality would create policies that would promote the orderly execution of its functions, for example, create an organisational structure review policy that would guide when and how this needs to be reviewed, linking this to an employment policy. This would give direction in terms of employment and promotion processes in order to ensure that methods are in place to promote efficient service delivery.

Further, the Municipality needs to change its systems so that quick methods are formulated and implemented to promote efficient service delivery. On this note, the support departments will have to be designed to support the line-function departments, and so will the systems that are used to facilitate the work that is done by the line-function departments. Finally, a culture of putting the public or consumers first must be instilled into the minds of the general staff and management, as well as the political principals; so that they always do their best to ensure that services are efficiently carried out in a way that will benefit the public.

6.5.   LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

It is vital to look back at the aims and objectives that were set out at the beginning of the research project, in order to evaluate whether or not the initial direction set for the research has been followed. The research has presented information on the historical character and background of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality and its predecessor, the Indlovu Regional Council, to lay a foundation for further discussion. The information also included the processes that the two organisations followed to formulate, and where applicable review, their organisational structures.

One of the gaps in the research relates to the changes that had to be made in terms of the research subjects that were anticipated at the beginning of the process, owing to the resignation of the manager of the Finance Department. However, it is felt that the other members of management that were interviewed provided enough information to work with, and that the absence of one person does not substantially alter the conclusions that were reached. Moreover, the manager who resigned used to report to the Municipal Manager, who was available for the interviews, and as head of

the administration section, is a reliable source of general information on the Municipality.

6.6. POINTERS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

It is suggested that, in future, the following questions be explored to bring more light to the topic:

- How does the dual leadership system of Municipality's management impact on efficient service delivery? This refers to the fact that municipalities are managed at an administrative level as well as at a political level; it would be worthwhile to research how this affects the way work is done at the Municipality.

- How does the fact that there are so many processes that limit the extent to which staff can perform impact on the morale of staff?

It is argued that findings from these perspectives would show that tackling a topic from different perspectives brings more insight to the topic and may bring evidence to suggest different recommendations to those that have been made in this research project.

6.7. SUMMARY

This chapter concludes the discussion on the evolution of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality's organisational structure and its impact on service delivery. The chapter has presented a summary of the different chapters of this thesis and contain conclusions and recommendations on the topic, as well some limitations of the research, and has made suggestions for future research.

The research project has succeeded in answering the primary question which forms the basis of the research. A conclusion, deduced from the research findings, states that **the Municipality's service delivery efforts can be efficient and sustainable if the organisation ensures that its structure is informed by its strategy and that these are both reviewed at regular intervals to ensure that the one always informs the other in an up-to-date manner**.

The recommendations of the research show that there is more to inefficient service delivery than lack of capacity, and as such these influences need to be managed by the municipality, as an organisation that is at the forefront for efficient service delivery.

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MANAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE: ANNEXURE 1

1. What is your position at the uMgungundlovu District Municipality?

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2. When did you start working for the organisation?

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3. What is your understanding of an organisational structure?

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4. In your view, what are the functions of an organisational structure?

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5. What do you think is or should be the role of an organisational structure in
    relation to service delivery in organisations?

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6. Organisations normally change management, leadership and strategies, what
    would you say is the essence of organisations even when such changes happen?

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7. What would you say is the significance of an organisational structure where
    service delivery is concerned?

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8. Does your organisation have an organisational structure?

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9. If yes, when did you formulate the organisation's organisational structure?

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10. On what basis is your organisational structure formulated?

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11. What process was followed to formulate this structure?

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12. What was the role of your staff members in the formulation of the structure?

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13. How complex is the structure? This refers to the extent that the positions are differentiated. Please answer by giving details of the kind of responsibilities were attached to your position i.e. if you were responsible for water, was it water planning, water installation, water research, monitoring or any other?

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14. In terms of organisational theory, there are five types of organisational structures, which one would you say the IRC used to have? (The simple, machine bureaucracy, professional bureaucracy, divisionalised form and adhocracy structures are explained to the interviewee).

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15. Would you say that this type is appropriate?

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16. How formalised is the organisation?

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17. How is the decision –making? Centralised or decentralised?

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18. What kind and how much specialisation exist between the different positions?

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19. How do you think having or regularly amending an organisational structure
    impacts on service delivery?

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20. What influence does an organisational structure have on your job in particular?

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21. What assistance do you (management) provide to help staff to understand their roles within the organisation, as prescribed by the organisational structure? i.e. training?

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22. Have you had any job reviews since the first version of organisational structure?

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23. If yes, what has been done? If not, why not?

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24. How often do you or should amend your organisational structure?

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25. What impact do you think an organisational structure has on the organisation's performance or service delivery?

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26. How do you or would you measure service delivery? i.e. what are your targets?

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27. Are all your staff members aware of these measures and how they need to be satisfied?

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28. If no, why not?

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29. If yes, how often do you review these measures and what is the staff's input to the process?

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30. How many times have you changed or amended your organisational structure since your organisation became a district municipality?

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31. Is there a specific system that s used to amend the structure? What is the basis for the formulation of the structure?

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32. If none at the moment, what do you think should be the basis for the formulation of the organisational structure? And when are you going to be using such?

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33. If there is, how is it impacting on your service delivery initiatives or activities?

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34. In conclusion, what would you say is the role of an organisational structure in the promotion of service delivery?

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QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STAFF: ANNEXURE 2

1. When did you start working for the Indlovu Regional Council?

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2. What powers and functions was the IRC responsible for, which had to be done directly by your department?

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3. From what you mentioned above, what were your responsibilities?

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4. What is your understanding of an organisational structure?

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5. In your view, what are the functions of an organisational structure?

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6. What do you think is or should be the role of an organisational structure in relation to service delivery in organisations?

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7. Organisations normally change management, leadership and strategies, what would you say is the essence of organisations even when such changes happen?

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8. Why do you think organisational structures are changed? Or under what circumstances should they be changed?

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9. What would you say are general weaknesses of organisational structures?

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10. Did the IRC have an organisational structure when you were appointed?

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11. If yes, when did you get to learn about it and understand your role in the organisation within the organisational structures' context?

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12. If yes, how complex was it? This refers to the extent that the positions were differentiated. Please answer by giving details of the kind of responsibilities were attached to your position i.e. if you were responsible for water, was it water planning, water installation, water research, monitoring or any other?

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13. In terms of organisational theory, there are five types of organisational structures, which one would you say the IRC used to have? (The simple, machine bureaucracy, professional bureaucracy, divisionalised form and adhocracy structures are explained to the interviewee).

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14. Would you say that this type was appropriate?

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15. How formalised was the organisation at that time?

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16. How was the decision –making? Centralised or decentralised?

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17. What kind and how much specialisation existed between the different positions?

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18. Would you say things have changed now, in terms of formalisation and centralisation or decentralisation of decision-making?

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19. If the IRC did not have a structure, what was used to make you understand your role within the organisation?

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20. Did you have any job reviews?

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21. If yes, how were they done and what did they contain?

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22. If yes, did the type and extent of job specialisation change? Please provide details

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23. How often were these reviews done?

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24. For every new organisational structure or powers and functions, how was your position or job affected?

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25. Did you get any training to link your position to the changed powers and functions and or / organisational structure?

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26. If yes, what was it?

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27. Was this training helpful? Please provide details for yes or no responses

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28. If there was no training, what kind of training would you have liked to have and
how would this have helped you perform your duties?

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29. In your view, what influence does the organisational structure affect or impact on
service delivery?

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30. How did the transition from IRC to the uMgungundlovu District Municipality
impact on your job?

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31. From when the UMDM took over reigns from the IRC, when was the organisational structure of the new institution formulated?

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32. What process was followed to formulate this organisational structure?

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33. What were the strengths or weaknesses of this process as far as it promoted efficient service delivery?

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34. Were there any changes that you had to make to ensure that you perform your job according to the new responsibilities of the Council? If yes, what were they?

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35. If not, how is it affecting your performance in relation to promoting the organisation's service provision?

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36. Did you get any training to understand how the transition process affected your work and role in the organisation?

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37. What do you think the amendment of the organisation's organisational structure would have on service delivery?

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38. What changes in the organisational structure would improve service delivery?

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39. Were there any weaknesses in the organisational structure? If yes, please provide details.

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40. Looking at the two organisations, the IRC and the UMDM, what would you say are the weaknesses of their organisational structures?

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