Stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management at the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council
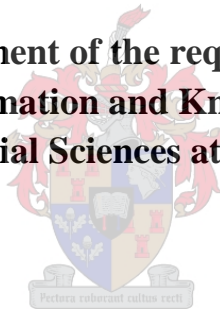
By:
Clement Mannya

Thesis presented in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy (Information and Knowledge Management) in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Stellenbosch University

Supervisor: Mr Daniel Botha and Prof Hans Müller
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Declaration

I Clement Mannya 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 at any university for a degree

Signature: ………………………..   Date: …………………………

Abstract

Local government in South Africa has gone through the transitional phase to become developmental with a number of challenges, one of the most prominent of which has been the lack of adequate financial resources to carry out various service delivery obligations. The lack of financial resources was one of the important reasons that led to local authorities being reduced from 843 to 284 municipalities through the process of re-demarcation that resulted in the consolidation of most of the local authorities. Because of these long standing challenges of financial viability, the objective of the study was to investigate stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management within the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council. It had become evident that existing financial constraints in municipalities in general and at Ekurhuleni in particular would remain for the foreseeable future, unless ways and means are found to improve the management of existing resources. The contention in this study is that the inclusion of stakeholders in strategic planning and management should be viewed as important to the Metro as it significantly lessens the doubt as to whether there is a common understanding of what is possible given the limited resource capacity to address many competing service delivery needs.

The literature study undertaken showed that local government has learnt lessons from the private sector, and has adopted some of its strategic planning and management practices and adapted them to suit public service delivery needs. In South Africa the local government planning framework is called integrated development planning (IDP). The IDP approach entails the formulation of focused plans, based on developmental priorities.

This approach assists in avoiding wasteful expenditure and perpetuating past spending patterns. Furthermore, the idea of adopting a more business-based approach does therefore not mean that the council is run like a company but rather that scarce resources are spent effectively and that all citizens have access to at least a minimum level of basic services. The IDP should be undertaken through participatory processes for effective urban management given the fact that private and public investments and municipal services delivery affect the well-being of all urban residents. Observation at the Ekurhuleni Metro revealed that while strategic planning and management does take place, it does not involve various stakeholders in the processes in a manner that is contemplated by the integrated development planning framework. The absence of a public participation strategy at the Metro meant that methods of engagement, consultation and communication with stakeholders are not clearly spelled out.

So is the identification of various stakeholders in terms of the needs, the roles that they can play in the planning processes, allocation of resources to facilitate their participation and empowerment in various planning processes. It was the conclusion of the study that there is limited stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management at the Ekurhuleni Metro.

Abstrak

Plaaslike regering in Suid-Afrika het deur 'n oorgangsfase na 'n ontwikkelings orientasie gevorder maar het ook 'n aantal uitdagings bygekry. Die prominentste een hiervan is die gebrek aan fondse om die verskillende dienslewering verpligtinge na te kom. Die gebrek aan finansiële bronne was een van die belangrike redes vir die reduksie van plaaslike owerhede van 843 na 284 munisipaliteit deur die proses van her-afbakening wat gelei het tot die konsolidasie van die meeste plaaslike owerhede. In die lig van die lang-durige aard van die uitdagings van finansiële lewensvatbaarheid, ondersoek hierdie studie belanghebber betrokkenheid in strategiese beplanning en bestuur binne die Ekurhuleni Metropolitaanse Raad. Dit het duidelik geword dat die bestaande finansiële beperkings in munisipaliteite in die algemeen, en in Ekurhuleni in die besonder, so sal bly in die voorsienbare toekoms, tensy meganismes gevind kan word waarmee die bestuur van die bestaande bronne verbeter kan word. Die studie voer aan dat die betrokkenheid van belanghebbers in strategiese beplanning en bestuur as belangrik geag behoort te word in die Metro aangesien dit die onsekerheid oor 'n gedeelde verstaan van wat moontlik is met die beperkte bronne kapasiteit in die hantering van die baie kompeterende diens behoeftes, verminder.

Die literatuurstudie poog om aan te toon dat plaaslike regerings lesse geleer het by die privaatsektor en sommige van die stategiese beplanning en bestuurspraktyke opgeneem en aangepas het by die publieke diensleweringsbehoeftes. In Suid-Afrika word die plaaslike regering beplanningsraamwerke, geïntegreerde ontwikkelingsplanne genoem (IDP). Die IDP benadering vereis die formulering van gefokusde planne, gebaseer op ontwikkelingsprioriteite.

Hierdie benadering vermy verkwistende uitgawes en die voortsetting van uitgawepatrone van die verlede. Verder beteken die aanvaarding van 'n besigheidsgeoriënteerde benadering nie dat die raad soos 'n besigheid bestuur word nie maar eerder dat skaars bronne effektief bestuur word en dat alle burgers ten minste toegang tot minimum dienste het. Die IDP behoort deur deelnemende prosesse uitgevoer te word ten einde effektiewe stedelike bestuur te verseker, gegee die feit dat private en publieke beleggings en minisipale dienste die welsyn van alle stedelike inwoners affekteer. Waarnemings by die Ekurhuleni Metro bring aan die lig dat, terwyl strategiese beplanning en bestuur wel plaasvind, dit nie verskillende belanghebbers op die wyse betrek wat in die geïntegreede beplanningsraamwerk voorsien word nie. Die afwesigheid van publieke deelname in die Metro het beteken dat meganismes

van deelname, konsultasie en kommunikasie met belanghebbers nie duidelik gemaak word nie. Dieselfde geld vir die identifikasie van verskillende belanghebbers in terme van belanghebberbehoeftes, die rol wat hulle kan speel in die beplanningsprosesse, die toewysing van bronne en die bemagtiging van belanghebbers om hul deelname te verseker. Dit is die slotsom van die studie dat daar beperkte belanghebber betrokkenheid in strategiese beplanning en bestuur in die Ekurhuleni Metro is.

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List of abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CBO	Community Based Organization
DBSA	Development Bank of South Africa
DCLG	Department of Communities and Local Government
DPLG	Department of Provincial and Local Government
EMM	Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council
IDP	Integrated Development Planning
LDF	Local development framework
LED	Local Economic Development
Metro	Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council
NGO	Non-government Organization
RDC	Rural District Council
RDDC	Rural District Development Committee
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SANCO	South African National Civic Organization
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America

Chapter 1

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Historical overview and the status of municipal service delivery in South Africa

There have been significant developments in South Africa since 1994 regarding local government. The developments include various forms of legislation that have been promulgated to make local government an important and strong tier of government in the governing process. South Africa's constitution requires that local government be developmental, with the responsibilities to structure and manage administrations, budgeting and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of constituent communities as well as promoting social and economic development. Since 1994, local government in South Africa has not gone through the transitional phase to become developmental without challenges. A number of challenges surfaced during the transition period, one of the most prominent of which has been the lack of adequate financial resources to carry out various obligations to constituent communities including constitutional obligations. Initially, there were 843 municipalities that were later reduced to 284. The reduction in the number of local authorities was brought about by the need to make municipalities financially viable, which entailed carrying out a process of re-demarcation that resulted in the consolidation of most of the local authorities.

The lack of financial viability of municipalities in South Africa dates back to the apartheid era into the post-1994 period where a dual approach to local government finance emerged along with the racial division of urban South Africa and the development of the homeland policy (DBSA, 2000, 51). According to this report, income from property taxes was controlled by the white-dominated town councils and used for infrastructure and service delivery in white towns only, to the exclusion of poor black communities. Income to fund black township development was from the sale of sorghum beer and other types of alcohol. Rent and service charges were levied to augment income for black townships but these proved to be insufficient to meet legitimate demands for services and infrastructure development.

The denial of property rights to blacks met with fierce resistance to the extent of making township ungovernable hence unviable. After the 1995/96 local government elections, formerly white and black local authorities merged into single municipalities, thus leading to the first form of legitimate municipalities in South Africa. Despite the amalgamation, most of the local authorities still could not become financially viable.

1.2   The Research Problem

The problem being researched is the involvement of communities and other stakeholders in the strategic planning and management at the Ekurhuleni Metro. Financial viability and sustainability of municipalities has been a major problem for local authorities in South Africa in the delivery of services. The prevailing socio-economic conditions characterised by high levels of unemployment and poverty, historical backlogs in infrastructure services and the uneven spread of economic resources throughout the country, have compounded the financial viability and sustainability of local authorities.

It has become evident that existing financial constraints will remain with local authorities for the foreseeable future, and unless ways and means are found to improve the management of existing resources, prospects for sustained service delivery at the local level appear bleak. An effective local authority is one that generates maximum benefits from resources with clear lines of accountability for performance in the delivery of services. The current service delivery challenges crises have forced municipalities to initiate austerity measures and re-examine some of their policies and practices. Higher levels of government are also intervening by introducing widespread financial management reforms in order to make municipalities viable and accountable. It would appear that getting things to work properly at the local government level would require more than higher-level government intervention. Rather, strong political leadership to demand high standards of efficiency and accountability at all levels of municipal administration might help in resolving the problem.

One of the major challenges that face municipalities is that they sometimes appear to be cutting back on expenditure in order to balance the budget, thereby forcing municipalities to find ways of providing acceptable levels of service using less resources than before. It is postulated that, what probably needs to happen is for local authorities to find optimal ways of using existing resources in the provision of services. Optimal resource utilisation would

include putting into place sound budgetary and financial procedures through comprehensive, accurate and transparent budgets that establish the basis for financial control and providing timely financial information.

Integrated into such budgetary and financial procedures would be objectives, targets and performance measures that will indicate as to whether resources allocated for a specific purpose achieve it in an effective and efficient manner. Such performance information can be used to increase accountability, promote operational efficiency and improve the planning and budgeting processes of municipalities.

To achieve this requires that strategic management and planning manifest itself at all levels within the municipality. Strategic plans will highlight operational objectives, time frames, responsible persons and clear deliverables, as well as making it easier to determine what each section and business unit within a municipality is accountable for. From the strategic plan, operational plans can then be drawn to drive day-to-day activities and give rise to an integrated approach in terms of how the various business units can work together in an efficient and coordinated manner.

Municipalities in the main have documented strategic plans that outline how they intend to achieve their vision. This however, still appears inadequate given the apparent non-involvement of stakeholders in strategic planning and management within the Metro. The absence of such an involvement casts some doubt as to whether there is a common understanding among councillors, management, staff and the broader community regarding desired outcomes. Desired outcomes are a clear picture of the future regarding the provision of the services and this will require that there be stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management as well as ensuring proper implementation of strategic plans for optimal service delivery.

Support for service delivery challenges facing municipalities can be highlighted by the following reported cases from local media – the space where much of the public dynamic that we focus on, plays out:

- President Thabo Mbeki's state of the nation address of 2006. According to the Delivery Magazine (2006), Local Government featured prominently in the annual state of the nation speech delivered to Parliament by President Thabo Mbeki including many of the commitments he made on behalf of government that impact directly on municipalities.

  "In particular, this will mean that each of these municipalities has a realistic Integrated Development Plan, a credible Local Economic Development Programme, and the material and human resources, as well as the management and operational systems to implement these IDPs and LEDs. Integration of planning and implementation across the government spheres is therefore one of the prime areas of focus in our programme for the next term of local government," President Mbeki was quoted as saying.

- In a Sunday Times Newspaper (2007) article Xolani Shandu wrote: "Minister of Housing Lindiwe Sisulu warned the ANC's National Executive Committee lekgotla last weekend that the country could face 'greater instability' in the run-up to the 2009 general elections if the government did not meet expectations on service delivery. Sisulu told her ANC colleagues that the party needed to do 'something radical and drastic' over the next two years if protests at a lack of service delivery which characterised the 2004 general elections and last year's local government elections were to be averted. Inadequacies in the delivery of basic services continue to be our biggest threat in the consolidation of democracy, she said".

- In another Sunday Times article (2006) Moipone Malefane wrote: "Jerusalem of the scriptures signifies a place of plenty, good health and prosperity. But the Jerusalem squatter camp in Ekurhuleni, east of Johannesburg symbolizes hell. This is a place where residents say promises made at the last election have not been met. The stench of human waste combines with rotten rubbish and giant rats roam the streets. The place is a reminder that not a lot has changed for some communities after 10 years of democracy. The 18 000 residents rely on just three taps for water and they are within about 100m of each other. This exposes residents to diseases such as cholera.

- The settlement which sprang up around 1998 is right on top of a hazardous site. It is surrounded by pollutants from the mine dumps, an open mining shaft and a dumping site. There is a Sasol Gas pipe running underneath. The area lies between Germiston and Boksburg. It's just a stone's throw from some of the most affluent suburbs in Boksburg. The Gauteng Government has visited Jerusalem to register it as part of a housing project that aims to eradicate informal settlements by 2014. But the conditions have led residents to threaten not to vote in the March 1, 2006 local government elections. They say they have been living there for more than five years without services and that there have been no offers to move them to a better place".

- In an article in the Star Newspaper (2005) two experts, David Hemson and Michael O'Donovan in providing an assessment of the government's performance noted as follows: "The mobilization of communities around the issues of service delivery is undoubtedly one of the most significant developments in the post-liberation era. In small towns and cities in the Free State, Eastern Cape, Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga, people are taking to the streets. The protests also show an increasing concern about the quality and quantity of delivery – the type of sanitation, the size and number of houses and the quality of water as well as the taps it comes out of. The upsurge is bringing greater awareness of just how much more is expected in delivery. Municipal government was supposed to be an 'efficient frontline development agency' but it is now increasingly under criticism".

- In an article in the Business Day (2007) Mathabo le Roux wrote: "A breakdown in municipal service delivery has led the Provincial and Local Government Department to stop National Treasury fund allocations worth more than R500m to underperforming municipalities. Private sector intervention has been mooted to help struggling municipalities become more efficient. Transfers under the municipal infrastructure grant worth R503m were withdrawn from 38 municipalities last month. The grant covers the cost of municipalities to provide services to the poor. While small municipalities in rural areas are the main under-spenders, some metro municipalities are also affected. Transfers of R100m to metro municipalities were stopped with R80 million being withdrawn from Nelson Mandela Municipality in Eastern Cape. Ekurhuleni and the City of Johannesburg also lost allocations.

- In terms of a provincial breakdown, urgent grants worth R216m were withdrawn from Eastern Cape, Limpopo lost R58.5m, Free State had R56m taken away, Mpumalanga R55.8m and Gauteng lost R49.2m. The withdrawals come amid renewed protests at some towns throughout the country over poor service delivery. Under-spending has continued despite attempts by government to help a number of municipalities with their capacity building initiatives".

These are some of the publicised instances of poor service delivery that made their way onto the print media to highlight the magnitude of the problem at hand and many others go unnoticed and unreported. Protests by constituent communities, in particular the poor, have been endless and will certainly be repeated to highlight their plight at the lack of services delivery should local government elections be called tomorrow.

While much has been done, given where the country is coming from in terms of the legacy of apartheid, a lot still has to be done given the endless and competing service delivery needs as well as expectations created by the advent of the democratic dispensation, especially at the local government level.

From the five instances referred to (above) from the various newspaper reports it has become apparent that there is lack of commitment on the part of municipal personnel in the performance of their service delivery functions, as President Mbeki alluded during his state of the nation address. It can also be deduced that financial management plays a significant if not a critical role. The expectations of constituent communities have not been met for a long time and people have now become impatient with the slow progress of service delivery as Minister Sisulu noted. People have now become emotional about non-delivery as this affects their daily lives (a promise/vision of a better life for all in terms of adequacy and quality of services is not materialising) and in certain instances municipalities appear to be lacking capacity including spending capacity as evidenced by National Treasury's withdrawal of funds earmarked for infrastructure development.

The people who are protesting are supposed to be the very people who have been involved in the strategic planning processes (integrated development plans) of the various municipalities, and that begs the question – if they were in fact part of the planning process, then what subsequently went wrong? Were they ever involved at all in the planning process or were they aware that they could be involved in the planning process and influence the way services are delivered to them? Or maybe they did not understand fully the whole IDP process including resource allocations, prioritisation or is there perhaps a problem with implementation of their IDPs including endorsing decisions that have already been taken by the municipalities?

The broader research problem is that participation goes beyond just promoting good governance by involving stakeholders in the strategic planning and management processes. It is not just a matter of transferring public responsibilities from those entrusted with government to civic groups. The broader research problem is whether local government programmes (regarded as participatory) are capable of truly empowering local communities to participate in in civic matters. Effective governance requires a population that is aware of rights and duties as well as its obligation. A reciprocal relationship between the state and civil society can only be maintained through empowerment and participation of local communities so that there can be alignment between the state and civil society. It is these horizontal networks of civic engagement that become even more important in bringing about social coherence and fostering social capital (Marcarney, 1996, 20) Participation in democratic forums contributes to the political development of individuals and provides an environment in which people can gain skills, knowledge and organizing capabilities that helps to engage the state even more effectively and to respond to problems themselves without state assistance (Abers, 2000, 178). The question is which local government participatory programmes can be described as contributing to empowerment of the poor, as some of them are just self-serving.

However Abers argues further, to say that government participatory policies differ according to who is invited to participate (normally the high-ranking officials such as the mayor), the tasks of the participants (other people formulate policy while others only implement) and the decision-making power of the participants (ruling party allies). Should participatory programmes not be (1) broadly open to those previously excluded from decision-making, (2) openly discussed in government policy agenda, rather merely implementing pre-designed programmes (3) involve effective citizen control for those who participate to have deliberative power.

1.3   Objective of the study, research hypothesis and questions

1.3.1   Objective

The objective of the study is to investigate the extent to which stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management within the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council is inclusive, consultative, transparent and facilitated. Stakeholders involvement in strategic planning and management would include and not be limited to (1) obtaining stakeholder input at the appropriate level to inform the policy and process design (2) summarising and communicating the outcome of the process to stakeholders (3) making them to see and understand where and how they fit into the bigger developmental picture and the benefit of such involvement.

The inclusion of stakeholders in strategic planning and management is important to the Metro as it significantly lessens doubt as to whether there is a common understanding of what is possible and what can be achieved within specified time frames and available resource capacity. Statements of vision and mission, policy papers and business plans may not be able to ensure programme implementation and service delivery if the implementation process is scattered, fragmented, non-consultative and non-inclusive, especially if inter and intra unit relationships are dysfunctional and if the workplace environment is characterised by confusion, stress, tension and frustration, particularly at the implementation and service delivery levels.

The process of making fundamental improvements in service delivery by the Metro must start with an understanding of their strategic intent, before they become bogged down with operational issues. An understanding of the entire value chain from the political imperatives that drives policy to how policy is developed and how it is implemented is crucial. This will enable stakeholders in the Metro to not only understand their roles in a larger context but also enable them in strategising for the future.

From the visioning exercise, each department, section, unit, sub unit and individual within the Metro must have a clear desired outcome that is measurable and is directly linked to its value proposition in the value chain. This means that each business unit, sub-unit or individual must have an offering and clients. The question becomes - is the offering and client relationship defined and clearly understood by all the stakeholders? The fact of the matter is that efforts of the Metro should flow from its market profile, which should indicate where the greatest utility may be delivered in terms of the demand for services. From this point on a vision and mission should be developed and flowing from this are specific objectives that will deliver on the greatest utility.

Key success factors should then be identified which equate with the intra-organisational enabling factors i.e. skills, structure, systems etc. Work plans can then be developed representing a link between the objectives set and the resources that are available to achieve those objectives, which will require choices/prioritizing. Work plans will also ensure that the Metro becomes clear on what its core functions is and help them to focus on what is really important.

Planning strategically is about realizing objectives, linking a vision to a final outcome and not acting by default. Linked to strategic planning and management will be the implementation of the performance management system for sections, business units and individuals where performance targets can be set to manage staff towards specific outputs. Performance can then be assessed, areas for improvement identified and individuals/units/sections units held accountable for non-performance. At the individual level, there will be a need for a mechanism to measure employee performance by first setting objectives and standards in order to identify non-performance or acknowledge (excellent) performance.

It also means that it is easier to determine optimal staffing needs or assess capacity building needs. For sections, divisions and departments the absence of performance standards and targets makes it difficult to manage staff towards specific outputs and to communicate the view that individuals' tasks are part of the broader service delivery process. It also makes it difficult for divisions, departments and other stakeholders to acknowledge that they need to work together towards achieving set objectives. Once a common vision is created and shared it is then possible to dictate from an objective basis how and on what terms you need to develop an implementation strategy and with whom, how and in what time frames this will be achieved.

1.3.2   Research hypothesis

The research hypothesis of the study reads as follows: "there is meaningful stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management at the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council". Meaningful in this context meaning that, the strategic planning and management process is inclusive, transparent, consultative, empowering, equitable, facilitation and collective visioning The Constitution and accompanying pieces of legislation including the Municipal Structures Act 1998 and the Municipal Systems Act 2000 have made provision for participatory processes and structures in the decision-making processes of local government. This was intended to give effect to our Constitutional Democracy by ensuring that regardless of socio-economic status, people have a say in the service determination and resource allocation processes. But even more importantly to ensure that issues of equity in social and economic development are properly addressed given historical backlogs and the uneven distribution of resources across the length and breadth of the country. Although the Constitution and accompanying legislation does make provision for participatory processes, what appears to be at issue is the quality of the processes in terms of inclusivity, meaningfulness, empowerment, consultation and collective visioning.

Stakeholders in the Ekurhuleni Metro include elected representatives, management, staff, trade unions, local communities, the business sector, national and provincial governments. Involvement of elected representatives, management, staff, National and Provincial governments in strategic planning and management appears pretty straightforward because of their direct contact on a regular and on-going basis with the Metro.

However the involvement of trade unions, local communities and the business sector does not appear that straightforward or regular despite being clearly spelt out in the integrated development planning framework. These are the stakeholders that are subject of this investigation.

1.3.3   Research Questions

Flowing from the key question or hypothesis are the following questions that the study will attempt to answer to test the hypothesis:

- Are the IDP/strategic management and planning processes sufficiently inclusive (including the poor, women, disabled and other marginal groupings)?

- Are the IDP/strategic management and planning processes carried out in a manner that simply legitimises decisions already taken by the municipality or are they aimed at genuinely enhancing service delivery through prioritisation and better resource allocation (do stakeholders understand the IDP process in terms of its purpose, their involvement and benefit)?

- How are communities and other stakeholders' engagement process managed:
  o How are communities mobilized for participation in the IDP
  o Do municipalities control the engagement process, or do community stakeholders have a say in it (i.e. is the agenda for stakeholder engagement drawn by the stakeholders themselves or is it drawn by the municipality but in consultation or just foisted upon the stakeholders)?
  o How are marginal groups enabled to participate?

- Is there a fuller understanding and appreciation by stakeholders of socio-economic issues and technical processes involved in the visioning processes (i.e. are stakeholders empowered with information and skills to appreciate and act on the complexities of resources determination, allocation and prioritisation processes)?

- Is the information for strategic planning and management disseminated timeously and widely and packaged (in terms of language and process) in a manner that facilitates stakeholder involvement in the planning process?

1.4   Importance of the study

In 1994 South Africa became a constitutional democracy with a provision in the Constitution for local government to be developmental[1]. By developmental local government the White meant local government that committed itself to working with citizens and other civil society groups to find sustainable ways of improving the quality of life of the marginalised groups that included women, the disabled and the poor. The Constitution further set out objectives for public participation in local government decision-making processes. In support of the Constitution various pieces of legislation were promulgated that required that local government commit itself to working with communities that it serves to find sustainable ways of meeting their social, economic and material needs.

This entailed developing mechanisms for consultative processes in determining the needs as well as resources to meets those needs. But even more importantly is that Apartheid has left South Africa with a terribly distorted legacy in terms of political, social and economic systems especially at the local level and nowhere is this legacy more apparent physically, than in the politically inspired planning that has left a racially and spatially fragmented landscape, urban sprawl, environmental degradation, massive structural problems, long travel times to work for the most disadvantaged and a legacy of massive poverty and gross inequalities in municipal services.

Resources to meet both the backlogs and current service delivery requirements are very limited, requiring consultation and consensus in the resource determination, allocation and prioritisation processes, by the various stakeholders. The system of representative democracy currently in place was intended to ensure that the marginalised groups – the poor, women, disabled etc. – are given the opportunity of being part of the decision-making processes thereby improving their social, economic and material conditions.

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[1] White Paper on Local Government (1998)

The municipality through its councillors is required to use all appropriate means to create the necessary conditions conducive to public participation. While this is not always an easy and straightforward task to perform and there might be serious limitations in some instances, the councillors should ensure that major role players within the municipality participate. Effective participation can only be brought about when councillors undertake active encouragement by focusing on social groups that are regarded as not well organised and lack the ability and power to articulate their points of view publicly.

This study is important in that it seeks to establish whether there are genuine processes in place to not only empower the various stakeholders but also ensure that they become part of the decision-making processes through participation rather than 'rubber-stamping' decisions already taken. The study is also important in ensuring that the provisions for participatory decision-making as contained in the supreme law of the land – the Constitution - and the accompanying pieces of legislation are being complied with.

1.5   Research design

- **Research methodology**

    The methodology adopted in conducting the study is a combination of 'conclusive' and exploratory research using case study method, with other sub-methods being brought in to support the main method.

- **Design of questionnaire**

    Design of the questionnaire took into account the different categories of stakeholders viz. community representatives (Ward Committee, IDP Forum, Community Development Workers, marginalised groups etc.), business representatives, journalists, the Mayor and Speaker of the Council, issues relevant to each stakeholder that are pertinent to the topic under study as highlighted under research questions, (1.3) above, including public participation strategy (engagement processes), inclusiveness, empowerment, consultation facilitation etc. See annexure for the questionnaire:

- **Data collection**

  o Primary data

    ▪ Personal observation

    ▪ Personal interviews

    ▪ Telephone survey where the personal interviews were not practically possible

  o Secondary data

    ▪ Internal sources such as planning and policy documents, legislation, guides, procedure manuals

1.6   Limitations of the study

Information for carrying out the study was gathered from literature relevant to the topic on private sector businesses, the public sector and local government in South Africa and other parts of the world; observation of strategic planning processes at Ekurhuleni, interviews with representatives of community organisations and politicians at the Ekurhuleni Metro, the experience of the person conducting the study given his involvement in local government consulting work, papers delivered at seminars and conferences, South Africa's state of the nation address, Ekurhuleni Metro IDP documentation, newspaper reports on the state of service delivery including challenges at the local government level and a People's Panel (28 people) survey carried out by The Star Newspaper just prior to the 2006 local government elections.

While the observation method of gathering information might not appear comprehensive or accurate enough, the information gathered was required to highlight issues of importance regarding stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management and provide guidance in seeking corrective measures to improve on existing processes.

The observation was initially carried off-site without the interaction of the various role players and later through interviews with the officials responsible to follow up and validate information initially provided. Pre-selected various stakeholders involved in the IDP process were also interviewed to shed some light in terms of their own experiences regarding the inclusivity of the planning processes and manner of engagement.

While this provided useful information in seeking clarity on issues observed at the Metro and those raised by literature on local government regarding stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management, there was a potential for some bias or subjectivity regarding the observation process, the information provided and its interpretation. The observer's bias in particular could have included subjective judgment regarding his negative attitude to events being observed given his prior experience with local government issues and the challenges faced. The bias of some of the people being observed and provided information was assumed to originate from their direct involvement with the Metro thereby being tempted to giving a bright or exaggerated perspective to protect their positions and other vested interests. Also, the information gathered maybe neither comprehensive nor accurate in all areas. However in most instances the information gathered, provided and commented upon, was that needed to assess stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management at the Metro, as well as identifying aspects and issues that needed to be improved on to reconfigure and streamline more effective stakeholder engagement processes. The offices of the Executive Mayor and the Speaker did not respond to questionnaires to give the Metro perspective.

1.7   Challenges encountered

The major challenge encountered during the course of the study was obtaining pertinent documentation from the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council on strategic planning and management processes followed, including involvement of the various stakeholders. The following documents that were requested could not be provided:

- The Metro public participation strategy and

- Minutes of meetings of the IDP Representative Forum, IDP Steering Committee and Ward Committees

- Records of attendance and the capturing of issues raised, discussed and recommended for adoption

- Other pertinent information available that could have shed light on stakeholder involvement in the planning process.

Information provided was the final IDP document for the period under review and some notices of meetings to be held and presentations made by officials and councillors at various locations across the Metro. Needless to say that the information provided was very scanty and to a large degree not very helpful regarding stakeholder participation at the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council planning processes. An official who was assigned to provide the information did however confirm that there is no other documentation on the planning process other than that provided by him or as contained in the IDP framework document provided by the Department of Provincial and Local Government to guide the IDP processes. He confirmed this by providing a presentation made by Council representatives at some of the meetings called, which reflected summaries of the IDP process as contained in the guide. According to the official, the IDP framework as provided is followed when preparing IDP's for the Metro.

The one document that was easy to obtain because information contained therein was of a public nature was the final IDP document, which contained the outcome of the strategic planning processes. The IDP is a strategic planning and management framework formulated by national government (Department of Provincial and Local Government) for use by all municipalities in the service delivery planning process with the understanding that each municipality will adapt the framework to suit the peculiarities of each locality. The absence of a localised strategic planning document (including a public participation strategy) indicating processes to be followed and how various stakeholders are involved led the person conducting the study to assume that the prescribed IDP framework is followed as is.

Questionnaires were sent to the Executive Mayor's office and the Speaker's office for a response regarding stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management, but no response was received. The two offices did however acknowledge receipt of the questionnaires. Two journalists who would have represented other stakeholders did not respond to questionnaires that were sent to them.

1.8   Outline of the study

Chapter 1

This chapter provides the introduction and a historic perspective of local government in South Africa and how it evolved including the challenges that it faced. The problem being investigated is defined as well as the objective that the study seeks to achieve. The chapter also gives a brief overview on the importance of the study being undertaken and touches briefly on the research design in terms of how the study will proceed, the limitations of the study, and challenges that were confronted.

Chapter 2

This chapter gives a brief overview of what research is all about before exploring various types of research (methodology) that can be undertaken and the method adopted to gather and analysis data about the study. The methodology will be a combination of exploratory and conclusive research with the case study method used to carry out the research.

Chapter 3

This chapter looks at strategic planning and management as practiced in the private sector, defining strategy and the strategic planning and management processes so as to provide a contextual background. The strategic planning and management process itself is reviewed including why it is important and the factors that are critical viz. leadership and stakeholders. The chapter concludes by highlighting the findings and their relevance to the study.

Chapter 4

The chapter provides a contextual background of strategic planning and management in the public sector given the need for public service managers to be aware of the importance of political management because of the fact that political themes are reflected in the delivery of public services. The chapter also looks into the social role and distinctiveness of public services, socio-economic context of change and the implications for public service delivery. These provide a context for strategic planning and management in the public sector in general and local government in particular.

Chapter 5

In this chapter, local government strategic planning and management processes are narrowed down to the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council looking specifically at the integrated development planning approach that has been adopted for local government in particular. The chapter looks at the role of the council in ensuring that public participation processes are put

into place in order to give effect to the requirements of the Constitution and the accompanying local government legislation, as well as ensuring that communities are involved in the needs determination and resource allocation processes to ensure equity and sustainability in improving the quality of their lives.

Chapter 6

Chapter 6 documents the results of the study firstly documenting the engagement processes that are undertaken or supposed to be undertaken by the Metro in engaging stakeholders in the strategic planning and management processes. Secondly the results of the quality of engagement by the Metro to establish whether the processes were inclusive, transparent, consultative, empowering etc.

Chapter 7

After documenting the results of the study in Chapter 6, a conclusion based on the results is reached as to whether strategic planning and management processes at the Ekurhuleni are in fact meaningful as defined (inclusive, transparent, consultative, empowering etc.). The chapter also documents recommendations in terms of how any deficiencies in the planning processes can be improved

1.9   Conclusion

There have been serious challenges facing local government in South Africa prior to and since the introduction of constitutional democracy. Challenges ranged from lack of skills at the operational level to managing finances and services delivery processes to implementing the picture of a future local government that has been envisioned. The introduction of integrated development planning to transform planning processes at the local level with the involvement of communities so as to address historical backlogs, prioritize accordingly given the limited resources and plan for the future, does not seem to have had the desired effect thus far.

The local government policy framework appears adequate but there appears to be challenges when it comes to implementation. The Constitution and the accompanying local government legislation clearly provide for participatory decision-making in the needs identification, resource determination and allocation processes. Proper institutional mechanisms have been put into place to facilitate public participation but service delivery inadequacy persist as

reflected in the on-going service delivery protests over a long period of time around the country. This then begs the question – are communities consulted and taken on board in determining service delivery needs and the required resources in their localities and do they have an understanding of the various planning processes for them to make informed decisions? But even more importantly is whether public participation provisions as contained in the Constitution, the Municipal Structures and Systems Acts are being implemented as required, by local government authorities.

The Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council was selected to investigate whether stakeholders are involved in strategic planning and management processes. The Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council case was looked at as a case study using the existing literature on private and public sector strategic planning and management and observation by means of a questionnaire to document how stakeholders are involved in strategic planning and management processes. Private sectors practices were looked at to see how these compare with public sector practices generally and how best they informed local government planning in particular.

The integrated development planning as a planning approach was looked at to see how this was implemented at the municipality, and so was the role of leadership and stakeholder involvement in shaping public participatory practices.

Chapter 2

2   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1   Defining research

For the purposes of this thesis, research will be defined as the search for evidence to support an existing theory that there is meaningful stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management in municipalities.

According to Gillham (2000, 2) research is about creating knowledge and the raw material of research is called evidence. Evidence is also used in courts of law and judicial enquiries to establish whether allegations made are true or false. The natural sciences are concerned with the development of evidence and of generalisable theory as to how these natural phenomena work. Using inanimate substances and holding some conditions constant, scientists are able to manipulate others to see what result emerges. Social sciences follow this approach if positivist but interpretative and meaning oriented research approaches have come to the fore in the last decades.

Payneerselam (2004, 2) defines research as "an organised set of activities to study and develop a model or procedure to find the results of a realistic problem supported by literature and data that its objective are optimized and further make recommendations for implementation".

Khanzode (2007, 3) defines research as "a systematic activity to achieve the truth and includes the procedure for collecting data, analyzing it and arriving at the conclusion". Khanzode says that research is closely concerned with human behavior and seeks to achieve expected results, keeping a view to develop any branch of modern activity.

In this study on stakeholder involvement on strategic planning and management within the Ekurhuleni Metro, research is being conducted to obtain evidence that support the theory about participatory processes in urban governance. Data will be collected and analysed on the quality of stakeholder involvement to arrive at a conclusion about the impact of such processes on decision-making and recommendations for implementation.

2.2   Types of research

Panneerselvam (2004, 6) goes on to say that research can be classified into exploratory, conclusive, modeling and algorithmic research:

2.2.1   Exploratory research

Exploratory research entails a general study that is conducted without having any specific end objective, except to establish as many relationships amongst a number of variables as possible. Exploratory research lays the foundation for the formulation of a hypothesis. There are different types of exploratory research and they are

- *Literature survey*

  This entails gathering of a number of literatures by various authors on a particular topic on which the person conducting the study has very little or limited knowledge, so that the person can then have a better understanding of the subject being studies.

- *Experience survey*

  This survey gathers information on the experiences of various experts on a particular topic in terms of their skills and knowledge developed over a period of time. The purpose of the survey is to generate ideas that can help in future research with minimal data collection effort

2.2.2   Conclusive research

Conclusive research is used to test the hypothesis of a research problem formulated using exploratory research. After validating the hypothesis a decision making framework is then formulated. The conclusive research draws definite conclusions for implementation. Conclusive research is classified into descriptive and experimental research as follows Panneerselvam (2004, 7):

- *Descriptive research*

  Descriptive research describes the characteristics of respondents in relation to a particular matter, product of service and is carried out with the specific objectives in mind. The person conducting the research can formulate a suitable set of questions to capture data from the respondents to test the hypothesis that has been formulated to arrive at descriptive conclusions from the analysis of the data

- *Experimental research*

  This type of research is used to study the effect of a set of factors on the response variable of a system of study in a controlled environment. In the experimental research, data is collected from respondents and analysed to test whether each or combination thereof has a significant impact on the response variable rating.

2.2.3 Modeling research

A model is defined as an abstraction of reality, where typical real-life situations are formulated into models that can be symbolic, mathematical or simulation (Panneerselvam, 2004, 9).

- *Symbolic model*

  A symbolic model is defined as a "representation of the performance measure of the system of interest in terms of its variables", where the attributes of a system are related by an equation

- *Mathematical model*

  Mathematical models are said to be mainly operations models intended to solve complex real life problems. Examples include linear programming models, inventory models, replacement models etc.

- *Simulation model*

  Simulation model is "an experiment conducted over a real life stochastic system in a scaled time frame to extract as many average operational statistics as possible". The model can be either continuous or discrete, where in a continuous simulation model the clock unit of the simulation is continuously incremental while in the discrete model it is incremented in a discrete manner.

The type of research being undertaken in this study is a combination of exploratory research and conclusive research. It is exploratory in that the person carrying out the research has very limited knowledge on the subject matter and has gathered a number of literatures by various authors so as to have a better understanding of the topic.

It is also conclusive in that a descriptive approach is being adopted in terms of the characteristics of respondents in relation to the particular topic being studied with the specific objective of the study as already stated. The person conducting the research will formulate a

suitable set of questions to capture data from the respondents to test the hypothesis that has been formulated to arrive at descriptive conclusions from the analysis of the data

2.3   Research methodology

The type of research that is being conducted is a combination of exploratory and conclusive research. Given the limited knowledge that the researcher has on the topic, reference will be made to previous studies made on this particular topic. A descriptive approach will also be adopted by formulating questions to capture data from respondents in order to arrive at a descriptive conclusion. A suitable methodology will be identified for the type of research that is being conducted. Payneerselam (2004, 2)) defines research methodology as a "system of models, procedures, techniques used to find the results to the research problem".

Khanzode (2007, 5)) listed the following amongst others, as the research methodologies that can be considered for various types of research:

- Conceptual vs. empirical

  The conceptual approach is adopted with a specific idea in mind such as a particular theory, while the empirical approach entails looking at various information, that is in data form and a sample is observed to arrive at some conclusion

- Qualitative vs. quantitative

  The qualitative approach is adopted for observing that which motivates certain kinds of behavior, while the quantitative approach depends on the quantity in terms of numbers that need to be observed or analysed.

Case study is always associated with qualitative method of analysis and as Gerring (2007, 1) put it "this offhand usage should be understood as a methodological affinity and not a definitional entailment". Gerring argues further to say that while large cross-case analyses are always quantitative, it is because of the too many cases to handle in a qualitative way, although case study research can be conducted either quantitatively or qualitatively.

Gillham (2000, 9) argues the case for adoption of qualitative methodology because he says that the qualitative approach focuses primarily on the kind of evidence that will enable you to understand the meaning of what is going on. The strength of qualitative methods lies in the ability to illuminate issues and provide possible explanations. However he says that it should be noted that although qualitative methods are primary to case study research, they are not

exclusive as all the evidence in the research need to be pulled into the case study as part of data collection.

According to Gillham (2000, 9) the qualitative method enables you to:

- Carry out an investigation where other methods, such as experiment are either not practicable or ethically justifiable
- Investigate situations where little is known about what is there or what is going on with more formal research coming later
- Explore complexities that are beyond the scope of more controlled approaches
- Get under the skin of a group or organisation to find out what really happens – the informal reality that can only be perceived inside
- View the case from inside out to see it from the perspective of those involved
- Carry out research into the process leading to results, rather than into significance of the results themselves.

But even more importantly Gillham (2000, 10) says that while the above represents a powerful argument for the use of qualitative methods, the following put some clarity on the philosophical base:

- Human behavior, thoughts and feelings are partly determined by their context, because to understand people in real life you need to study them in their context and the way they operate.

- Objective research techniques - abstracted controlling – can produce results that are artefacts of the method used (an artefact is something that only arises because of the method that has been used such as opinions given in a questionnaire), to get the results that are true for the people concerned in real life.

- How people feel, behave and think can only be understood if you get to know their world and what they are trying to do in it. Objectivity can sometimes ignore data important for an adequate understanding of the subject matter.

The research methodology that will be adopted here will be the qualitative research methodology. The subtype at issue is the case study.

2.3.   Research method - case study method

The method to be used in carrying out research will be the case study method. Khan (2000, 251), defines a research method as part of the research methodology (finding a solution to a problem on a scientific basis). Khan argues that social sciences have their own approach in studying and investigating social behavior and establishing generalisations in terms of laws. Khan goes on to say that social science can also be a positive science because it is concerned with actually what happens or would happen under various controlled and uncontrolled conditions. As social scientists try to understand the sentiments of social units, motivational factors, social developments and welfare, they also try to understand the pattern of social behavior and because social laws are always elastic and conditional, they indicate the probabilities under a set of given conditions.

Khan goes further to argue that, because human behavior is never constant, it is not possible to test and verify social laws by experiments as there is always an exception to the law. To conduct an in-depth study, Khan contends some methods like case study method can be used to facilitate different components and characteristics of a unit under study. According to Khan, when using the case study method for a comprehensive study, a researcher has to select a particular unit, which may be an individual, group or organisation, an incident, an event or an occurrence. A related unit is selected on the basis of aims and objectives of the study, with the researcher specifying and defining it and making a case out of it for the purpose of the study.

The study is carried out for a period in the past, present and future, while making efforts to classify the various phases of the intended study. The purpose of the classification is to maintain comprehensiveness of the various features of the case under study. Khan (2008, 251) has identified the following as the criteria for selecting the case study method:

- Selected study must be treated as an independent study
- Individual behavior should be considered socially significant and consequential
- Experiences must be interrelated within the context of the past, present and future
- Obtained data must be integrated and put into conceptual framework
- Study has to be on scientific method

Khan (2008, 251) also highlights the following as the demerits of the case study method:

- Data collection tends to be prejudiced

- Conclusion may not be subjected to universal applicability

- Researcher may be under unethical elements and entry of values may not have a control to an ethical requirements

- Method lacks in the repetitive capability in scientific terms

In order to deal with these disadvantages of the case study method Khan proposes that the researcher opt for a scientific approach and not pay attention to inquisition and introspections only, but also to have confidence in the search for concrete facts and not be biased and prejudiced in approach. The entire approach, Khan says, should be discernable into an accepted theoretical framework and proper perspectives as the case study method is certainly one of classic approaches of social institution where it can be applied widely. Khan goes on to say that the case study approach should be adopted in real life situations as a basis upon which the structure of the case study is built.

Harling and Laurier (2002, 1) define case study as "a holistic inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its natural setting", where natural setting refers to the context within which the phenomenon appears. Harling and Laurier say that the research methodology underlying case study is different from other methodologies in that they use quantitative approaches that study aggregates of a population rather than the uniqueness of individuals, which case study does.

Case study considers all aspects of the situation describing the full range of influences associated with the phenomenon. The role of the researcher in qualitative research in a case study is to develop expected as well as unexpected patterns among variables. This, according to Harling and Lauries (2002, 5) "requires that the researcher develop an initial set of questions for collecting data and playing an interpretive role, while making observations, exercising subjective judgement, analyzing and synthesizing and realizing all the while his/her own consciousness". This ensures that the results produced reflect the individual researcher in making subjective claims about the meaning of data. Harling and Lauries (2002,3) view the role of theory in case study as being starting point that gives direction and structure to the initial set of questions that the researcher asks. The researcher reacts to the data received during questioning, using the theory to "filter and organize the data received", thereby confirming existing theory, while at the same time being careful to ensure that the theory does not pre-determine the results.

Zainal (2007, 1) refers to Yin (1984, 3) who defines case study research method "as an empirical inquiry that investigates contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used". Zainal explains further to say that a case study is a unique way of observing any natural phenomenon which exists in a set of data, where unique means that only a very small number of subjects of interest are examined in detail. Zainal (2007, 3) further refers to Yin (1984) that there are three categories of case study viz.: exploratory which explores any phenomenon in the data which serves as a point of interest to the researcher; descriptive case study which describes the natural phenomena which occur within the data in question and explanatory case study which examines the data closely at both the surface and deep levels to explain the phenomenon in data.

Zainal (2007, 4) cites Yin (1984) about the advantages of case study method which are (1) the examination of data is often conducted within the context of its use (2) variations in approaches allow for both quantitative and qualitative analysis of data and (3) the detailed qualitative accounts often produced in case studies not only help describe data in real life environment but help to explain complexities of real life situations which may not be captured through experimental research. The one major disadvantage of case study method according to Zainal (2007, 5) is its reported lack of rigour and tendency for a researcher to have a biased interpretation of the data.

2.3.1. The underlying principles

Gillham (2000, 1) defines case study by first defining the word "case" which he refers to as "a unit of human activity embedded in the real world, which can only be studied or understood in context, which exist in the here and now that merges in with its context so that the precise boundaries are difficult to draw". Gillham goes further to say that a case can be an individual, group, institution, or community and then defines the case study as "one which investigates all of the above to answer specific research questions, seeking a range of different kinds of evidence, which is there in the case study to be abstracted and collated to get the best possible answer to the research questions" (Gillham, 2000, 1). No single source of evidence will be sufficient on its own but multiple sources are required, each with its strengths and weaknesses, according to Gillham. Another fundamental characteristic he says, is that you do not start with prior theoretical notions until you get hold of the data to understand the context so that you can know what theories work best or make the most sense

Gillham is of the view that in science there are no ethical issues and the inanimate substances use cannot complain or try and make sense of what is going on. However with human beings there are limits to what can be done to manipulate conditions that might affect human behavior. Gillham is of the opinion that some novice researchers are obsessed with being scientific in terms of getting good quality of evidence, interpreting it and checking it in legitimate ways.

2.3.2. The case study conundrum

According to Gerring (2007, 1) there are two ways of conducting a case study research, the one is called cross-case method where a number of cases are studied on the same subject matter. The other is called within-case or case study method where you pick a particular case and thoroughly study it. Different fields of study have different key units. For anthropology and sociology the key unit is the social group, for psychology is usually the individual, for economics it may be the individual, firm etc. while is political science it is often the nation states, regions, organisations, statutes or elections.

In all the instances the case study rests implicitly on the existence of a micro-macro link in social behavior. Gerring (2007, 1) observed that in the recent past most areas of study or disciplines in particular the social sciences have been moving away from a variable centered approach to causality and toward a case-based approach. Despite the movement towards case study research there has however been some heightened skepticism toward cross-case econometrics and according to Gerring it is argued that it does no longer appear self-evident that non-experimental data drawn from nation states, cities, social movements and various other complex phenomena should be treated in a standard format because of a plethora of reasons that include (Gerring 2007, 3):

- The problem of arriving at an adequate specification of a causal model given many possible models and the associated problem of interactions among these covariates
- Identification problems which cannot always be corrected by instrumental variable techniques
- The problem of "extreme" counter-factuals i.e. extrapolating or interpolating results from a general model where extrapolations extend beyond the observable data points
- Problems posed by influential cases
- Arbitrariness of standard significance tests.

Another factor raised against the case-based analysis is the development of a series of alternatives to the standard linear model of cross-case analysis, thus establishing a variegated set of tools to capture of social behavior. According to Gerring (2007, 4) case study research is thus viewed by most methodologists with great circumspection because they further argue that a work that focuses attention on a single example of a broader phenomenon; is often identified with loosely framed and non-generalisable theories; biased case selection; weak empirical leverage; subjective conclusions; non-replicability and causal determinism.

Gerring thinks that much of what is known about the empirical world has been generated by case studies and case studies continue to make a large proportion of work generated by social disciplines. Gerring also holds a strong view that the case study method is generally unappreciated and poorly understood.

2.3.3. What to look for in qualitative research

According to Gillham (2000, 3) all researchers in the various disciplines are concerned with two things viz.: evidence and theory. Evidence, says Gillham (2000, 3) is about facts that one needs in order to understand theory. Theory on the other hand says Gillham is something that is commonly assumed to be existing and established and if anything, it is something that researchers create or modify existing theory. Theories may be generalisable aspects of a case study research in terms of the data that you find, which maybe specific to a unit or maybe useable by other people in understanding how other units operate.

However, theory is not primary, but evidence is primary, says Gillham (2000, 20). Working inductively from what is available in the research setting develops grounded theory i.e. theory that is grounded in the evidence that is turned up. In the real world, evidence is of various kinds and a case study researcher should have an open mind by looking for more data and deferring analysis until something comprehensive has been gathered, according to Gillham.

2.3.4. Different data, different methods

The case study method according to Gillham (2000, 45) is the main method and within that there are different sub-methods that are used including interviews, observations, documents and records analysis, work samples etc. Data accumulated by different methods but focusing on the same issues are what is referred to as the multi-method approach. Each of the methods has its strengths and weaknesses and if all the methods agree on what is being achieved, there can be a reasonable prospect that the picture that emerges is true. If they don't agree, caution

need to be exercised in basing understanding on any one set of data, although it would not necessarily follow that one set of date is wrong.

This approach from different methodological standpoints is usually known as triangulation. If they all agree then everything is true, but if they don't then you'll either have to explain or question the adequacy of the methods. A common difference is between what people say during an interview and what they actually do and this is what you have to explain because to expect people to say exactly what they do is tantamount to misunderstanding how people function

The data for the research was collected by means of the following methods:

- Secondary method of data collection

   The following method of data collection were used

   o Literature research

      The purpose of the literature research was to assess the state of existing knowledge on the tentative research question that is being pursued. Using the literature research, answers were sought to the following questions regarding the topic:

      - What knowledge exists and is generally accepted regarding the topic?

      - Are there important differences or disagreements among scholars on this topic?

      - Are there significant problems or limitations with any of the studies undertaken?

      - What questions remain unanswered?

      - What aspects and approaches seem relatively unexplored?

      But even more importantly the purpose of the literature research was to find an answer to one specific research question that drove the rest of the research and that was – "are stakeholders involved in strategic planning and management at the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council?" Literature by various authors on strategic planning and management was studied to establish how stakeholders are involved in strategic planning and management. From the literature research, a framework was developed regarding stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management and the framework covered the following issues: inclusiveness, consultation, transparency, facilitation, empowerment, equitability and the visioning process.

- o Internal sources such as planning and policy documents, legislation, guides, procedure manuals

- o External sources such as journals, government publications, books, magazines, newspapers, annual reports and research reports

- Primary method of data collection

  - o Observation method

    Observation is a technique that involves directly observing behaviour with the purpose of describing it. The observation technique can be classified into participant and non-participant observations. Participant observation occurs when an observer participates with the people and in events he or she is observing, while non-participant observation occurs when an observer observes events without interacting with the persons being observed. Non-participant observation may further be classified into structured and unstructured observation.

    The aim of unstructured observation is to observe and record behaviour in a holistic way without the use of a predetermined guide. Structured observation, on the other hand, refers to a technique in which an observer observes events using a guide that has been planned in advance. The non-participant observation technique to be used in this study was structured observation.

    Key steps followed when conducting the structured observation:

    - ▪ Determined what was to be observed

      This started with preparation of observation protocol to determine what was to be observed and in this particular instance, it was stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management in other parts of the world (Zimbabwe, Tanzania, United Kingdom and Brazil) and at the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council. Observation of strategic planning in other parts of the world entailed review of case studies undertaken. At the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council's documents that contained the Council's integrated development plan, the Department of Provincial and Local Government documentation (guides) on the integrated development planning process as a strategic planning and management approach was also observed. Other documentation on the Metro stakeholder engagement processes

and newspaper reports on challenges facing local government service delivery were also observed.

▪ Developed an observation guide

❖ The basis for structured observation was the observation guide. A list of issues/process steps was prepared in advance based on the objectives of the study. Since it is difficult to predict observable behaviour in advance, a protocol and checklist was structured to act as a guide, with more attention being paid to specific aspects that appeared central to the problem being investigated and these included:Observer behaviour during observation – the observer to be discreet and try not to stand out or affect the normal flow of activity during observation

❖ What to document – the observer to document what is actually taking place rather what he is expecting to see as this might affect the quality of the outcome.

❖ How to document what is learned during observation – field notes taken in loco from the experience of the observation and to be expanded immediately to avoid some details fading out of memory

❖ Responsibilities were defined as follows:

 ♦ Identified and developed relationships with key informants

 ♦ Obtained and perused Metro IDP documents so as to observe how stakeholders are engaged

 ♦ Where required sought clarification on other forms of records kept for documenting outcomes of participatory processes

 ♦ The observation to be undertaken by the person undertaking the study

❖ The observation was initially undertaken off-site (away from Ekurhuleni Metro Council), where documentation relating to the strategic planning and management

process was perused and later on site through interaction with officials and politicians to validate and clarify the findings

* ❖ Preparation for the observation entailed first obtaining a thorough understanding of what the study was about, knowing about documentation to be obtained, determined objectives to be achieved and drew actions steps to follow.

* ❖ Being discreet enough about who I was and what I was doing and not disrupt normal activity, while at the same time being open enough so that the people I interact with did not feel compromised about information disclosed or provided to me.

* ❖ The person who conducted the study prepared the observation guide and no other input in this regard was sought from other sources. The guide was prepared to suit the specific off-site conditions.

* ▪ Observations conducted

At the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council the initial observation was done off-site (looking at strategic planning and management documentation and related records) such that there was detachment from the people being observed to avoid any potential biases. Subsequently interviews were conducted with Metro authorities and various stakeholders on strategic planning and management processes followed in the Ekurhuleni Metro. The following were also observed regarding local government challenges/issues: newspaper reports on service delivery challenges leading up the 2006 local government elections; the President Sate of the Nation address just prior to the 2006 local government elections, the Star Newspaper Panel services delivery satisfaction survey just prior to the 2006 local government elections.

Focusing on the issues central to the problem being investigated, all observations were documented. During the observation, data being collected was regularly reviewed to ensure accurate documenting during all the stages of the observation so as to ensure a correct balance between brevity and comprehensive documentation of the observations.

The following were the issues on stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management that were observed:

❖ Identification of, and encouragement of stakeholders to participate in the IDP process

❖ Suitability and representivity of the various stakeholder groups

❖ Communication with stakeholders in terms of proper briefs, availability and timeliness of information and the dissemination thereof

❖ Manner of stakeholder involvement/engagement at the various planning stages

❖ Capturing of issues raised during the engagement and how the input is collected

❖ The roles of the different stakeholders during the participation process

In conducting the observation the focus was on:

❖ Common themes emerging in the observation and if these did help in illuminating the study's hypothesis

❖ Any observable deviations from established patterns and factors that explain these patterns

❖ Interesting issues emerging from the observation and how they help illuminate the study's hypothesis

❖ Given issues that emerged from the observation, established whether the hypothesis need to be revised

❖ Any patterns emerging from the observation similar to the findings in the literature study and if not what might explain the differences

o Personal interview using a questionnaire

o Telephone interview using a questionnaire were personal interviews (face to face) were not possible because the participants did not have enough time to meet with the interviewer or distance constraints (participants were not easily accessible)

2.3.5. Sources of data

- Secondary sources of data for the study comprised:

  o Literature on strategic planning and management in the private and public sectors

  o Literature on local government strategic planning and management including the South African integrated development planning

  o Literature on strategic planning and management and stakeholder involvement in local government planning in Zimbabwe, Tanzania, the United Kingdom and Brazil

  o Papers delivered at seminars and conferences on city visioning and planning

  o Newspaper reports on service delivery challenges at the local government level, just prior to the 2006 local government elections in South Africa.

  o The Star Newspaper: carried out a survey during the month of February 2006, just a few days prior to the local government elections to elicit voter views of local government service delivery challenges. Three panels (totaling 28 ordinary people) made up of older men and members of the youth and women panels were chosen among the hundreds of Star readers. All members were chosen, as far as possible to represent the Stars' readership and came mainly from Greater Johannesburg (covering Johannesburg, Vaal and Ekurhuleni).

  o They were selected on the basis of their age, gender, race, the party they felt closest to, seeking their answers to questions about their greatest fears and greatest hopes regarding local government service delivery.

  o State of the Nation address by the President

- Primary sources – interviews with:

  ▪ Interviews with Ekurhuleni Metro official responsible for integrated development management processes within the Metro

  ▪ Representatives of community organisations as follows (provided by the Metro):

    o Organizer of the Winnie Mandela Concerned Residents Association (3000 members). Done telephonically on the 22 November 2011.

    o Deputy Chairperson of the Kathorus Concerned Residents (5000 members). Done telephonically on the 23 November 2011.

- o Coordinator of the Informal Settlements Network, representing the Makause Informal Settlement in Primrose, Germiston (13000 members) on the 23 November 2011 (Telephone .

- o Chairperson of the Barcelona Community Civic Organisation (15000 members) on 23 November 2011 .

- ▪ Business organisations.

  - o Chairperson and Committee Member of the Brakpan Emerging Contractors' Association (122 members), on the 23 November 2011

  - o CEO and Chairperson of the Ekurhuleni Business Initiative (EBI) with a business membership of 3500 (EBI is also a member of the Ekurhuleni Business Association). Interviewed on the 25 November 2011

- ▪ The Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council documents on strategic planning and integrated development planning - the IDP document for the period under review (Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council IDP, Budget & SDIP Report for 2006/07 – 2008/09)

2.3.6. Data analysis

Data analysis

The analysis of the data gathered for the study started when the data collection began and comprised mainly of qualitative analysis with descriptions of processes described. The analysis was mainly qualitative in that it described the processes followed to involve stakeholders in strategic planning and management within the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council, and thereby answering the key research question of whether stakeholders are involved in strategic planning and management at Ekurhuleni Metro. These qualitative aspects were described in narrative style in order to guide the design of interventions to correct the existing anomalies where required. The data collected from the various sources was analysed thematically (i.e. not using computer software or statistical analysis).

Analysis of the findings focused on:

- Inclusiveness – are all stakeholders at various levels identified for involvement in the strategic planning and management process?

- Consultation to reach consensus – is there consultation through public debate and presentation of various issues or do councillors or officials take ready-made decisions to the communities for endorsement?

- Transparency – is information flowing freely from the authorities to the people for effective involvement and is the information given to communities in advance to enable stakeholders to make informed decisions?

- Facilitation – are local stakeholders enabled to take a leading role in doing things themselves by evaluating own circumstances and resources and coming up with agreeable and workable solutions?

- Empowerment – are people's capacity built to move them from being passive victims of social processes to being active agents of change with the powers to decide, act and become real owners of the processes?

- Equitability – are all stakeholders' interests and priorities considered by exploring and identifying resources to share, manage and use them appropriately ensuring fair, just and reasonable room for full and active productive participation?

- Visioning – is there a collective conceptualization of the needs, opportunities and dreams of the majority, while at the same time taking cognizance of minority views?

2.4. Conclusion

The study will be conducted using the qualitative research methodology. The type of research to be carried will be a combination of exploratory and conclusive researches. The exploratory research component will enable the gathering of data from a number of literatures by various authors on the specific, relevant and particular topics on which the study is being conducted so as to gain a better understanding/interpretation of the subject matter by reasoned deductive and inductive inference. The conclusive component will enable the description of the characteristics of findings and responses in relation to the topic. A suitable set of questions will be formulated to capture data from the respondents to test the hypothesis and arrive at descriptive conclusions form the analysis of data obtained. The case study method has been adopted by selecting strategic planning and management as a research unit (topic) and

relating it to a case unit, the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council on the basis of objectives of the study, specifying and defining it and making a case out of it for the purpose of this research.

According to the literature reviewed, the qualitative approach focuses primarily on evidence that will enable an understanding of what is going on regarding stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management. It is also important to note that the qualitative dimension in the case study method lies in its ability to illuminate issues and provide possible explanations. It also enables the illumination of issues and provision of possible explanations.

Although the case study method is not without weaknesses authors suggest carrying out the study with an open mind without any biases or prejudiced approaches. The merits of the case study method appears to be compelling to adopt it as a research method of choice because, according to Gillham human behavior, thoughts and feelings are partly determined by their context, and to understand people in real life you need to study them in their context and the way they operate.

As part of the research, the next chapter (Chapter 3) will look into strategic planning and management generally, first obtaining an understanding of the term "strategy" and the process strategic planning and management including the context in which the term and the process itself are used. The research further looks strategic planning and management processes practices including the factors that are critical for strategic planning and management to be successful. Organisational leadership and stakeholders are factors that are regarded as being very critical for any organisation to successfully develop and implement a strategy.

Chapter 3

3   STRATEGIC PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

3.1   Introduction

Strategic planning and management has its origins in the non-profit sector (Drucker, 1999, 6) and was later adopted by the private sector and as time passed by the public sector also adopted this private sector practice. Below, the practice of strategic planning and management in the private sector is explored by first understanding the contextual setting and then defining strategy itself and then strategic planning and management. According to Macmaster (2004, 85), there appears to be some interchangeability in the use of words "strategic planning" and "strategic management", and it is hoped clarity can be obtained from the definition by various authors. Once there is some understanding, then the importance of strategic planning and management to the public sector is explored. Also, the centrality and importance of organisational leadership and stakeholders are also looked into regarding their relevance to the strategic management and planning processes.

3.2   Strategic planning and management: the contextual setting.

According to Layton (2002, 26), strategic management has a set of tools, which when used together, are very powerful in guiding the fortunes of an organisation. Layton defines strategic management as "the planning, decision-making and actions that determine the success of an organization in the medium to longer term" (2002, 6). It is a broad master plan that states the organisation's mission and objectives and shows how these will be achieved over a period of time. Layton mentions two key features of strategic management and these are: (a) the time frame, in that strategic management is concerned with the medium-to-longer term; around five years, and (b) the focus is on outcomes rather than on inputs and outputs. At the strategic level, management is concerned with setting goals and objectives (which are the desired and therefore planned for outcomes) and formulating strategies (essentially identifying outputs) to achieve those outcomes.

Operational management on the other hand according to Layton "has a short-term time frames (no more than twelve months) and the focus is on inputs and outputs necessary to achieve desired outcomes". In most organisations that practice strategic management, there

are strong links between strategic management and operational management. At the operational level, management is concerned with formulating operational plans and budgets (which document planned outputs and planned inputs of resources required to achieve those outputs) and the implementation of those action plans (that is, managing the actual inputs of resources to achieve the actual outputs).

Layton goes on to say that at the most basic level strategic management is about finding answers to three key questions: (a) where are we now? (b) where do we want to be in about five years' time? (c) how are we going to get there from where we are now to where we want to be? All these three questions are addressed through strategic planning and management.

3.3   Strategy defined

The following definitions of strategy have been explored:

Macmaster (2004, 84) "Strategy is the direction and scope of an organization over the long term which achieves advantage for the organization through its configuration of resources within a changing environment to meet the needs of markets and to fulfill stakeholder expectations".

Macmaster (2004, 84) also refers to Michael Porter who "describes the foundation of strategy as the activities in which an organization elects to excel. The essence of strategy according to Porter is choosing to perform activities differently from competitors so as to provide a unique value proposition. A suitable strategic position in Porter's view comes from a system of activities each of which reinforces the others and that strategy is not only what an organization intends to do but also what it decides to do".

Pocket Mentor Series (2009, 4) defines strategy as "a process that spurs major change so that an organization can achieve outstanding results. Strategy is about understanding what you do, looking over long-term future to determine what you want to become and most important, focusing on how you plan to get there". Mentor sees strategy as bringing change to improve the results and clarity to what you want the organisation to become in the future as being very important steps in the life of any organisation.

Kaplan and Norton (2004, 4) define strategy as "how an organization intends to create value for its shareholders, customers and citizens". Kaplan and Norton further noted that no two organisations think about strategy in the same way – some described strategy by their

financial plans, for revenue and profit growth, others by their product/service offering, others from a quality and process perspective etc.

From the above mentioned definitions a number of important factors come to the fore and these include the need for planning activities in order to achieve a stated goal through proper determination and use of resources. Strategic planning is a team effort and the outcome of the activities and deployment of resources should have an impact on the organisation by adding value or bringing about the desired change for the benefit of the stakeholders. Some of the measurable outcomes from strategic planning should be improved service delivery and the quality of the lives of the affected people. Because of uncertainty or risks that can make it difficult to achieve stated goals, the need for planning arises in order to establish mechanisms of dealing with uncertainty.

The strategy once formulated enables the organisations to take decisions about what to do, when to do it, how to do it and what the expected outcomes will be. Strategy once formulated becomes a sustainable way of creating value by the organisation to the community that its serves. It is intended to be an outcome of an inclusive process in order to legitimise the decisions taken and ensure buy-in when implementation takes place. Strategy can therefore be regarded as a process that is integral to the long-term success of an organisation.

3.4   Strategic planning and management defined

In this study use is being made of the term "strategic planning and management" and it is important that this be defined for a proper context to be set for the combined use of the term "strategic planning and management". First, it will attempted to explain and clarify the constructs "strategic management" and "strategic planning" by looking at available definitions by some of the authors and how they draw conclusions as to differences and similarities. According Macmaster (2004, 85), authors on strategic management can have two opposed definitions. The first entails "a comprehensive term which poses strategic management as the total management of an institution and refers to the overall process which includes not only strategic planning but also organizing, leading and controlling strategy-related decisions and actions in an institution". This implies that strategic planning is merely a portion of strategic management.

Strategic planning enables public managers to evaluate, select, and implement alternatives for rendering effective service. This school of thought argues that strategic planning is

interwoven in the whole management process. However, a more traditional definition of strategic management states that it is the daily implementation of strategic plans of an institution. Strategic planning is seen as a senior management responsibility and the strategic planning process forms an important link between comprehensive planning and the annual operating and capital budgets.

According to Macmaster another school of thought argues that although strategic management is often discussed as an extension of strategic planning and the two terms often are confused and used interchangeably they are by no means synonymous. Strategic planning is defined "as a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does and why it does it. It blends futuristic thinking, objective analysis and subjective evaluation of goals and priorities to chart future courses of action that will ensure the long-run vitality and effectiveness of the organization" (Macmaster, 2005).

This group further contends that, in contrast to the more closed-system orientation of traditional long-range planning and conventional programme planning, strategic planning is a 'big-picture' approach. Strategic management shares these same attributes but it is a more encompassing process that is concerned with managing an organisation in a strategic manner on a continuous basis. According to this group of scholars, strategic management is "an advanced and coherent form of strategic thinking, attempting to extend strategic vision throughout all units of the organization, encompassing every administrative system" (Macmaster 2005, 85).

As indicated earlier on, for purposes of this study the all-encompassing word of "strategic planning and management" will be used. It should be noted that strategic planning and management takes place at three different levels viz. corporate level to meet the expectations of major stakeholders, at the business level to compete successfully in a particular market and at operational level in terms of how the component parts deliver on the corporate and business level goals. Communication and buy-in by key stakeholders are vital. Strategic planning and management is about (a) time frames within which objectives should be achieved and (b) the outcomes of the strategy implementation processes. Once the strategy has been formulated, the implementation of strategy should start by translating the strategy into operational plans; then align the organisation with the strategy thereby sending a consistent message and set of priorities across the organisation; thereafter they need to ensure

that the strategy within the organisation is everyone's everyday job and on a continual processes and mobilising change through leadership to ensure buy-in and coordinated teamwork in the execution of the strategy.

3.5   The strategic planning and management process

3.5.1   Strategy formulation

Strategy formulation is achieved through the processes of planning and implementation, involving senior executives and various units within the organisation. Senior executives would normally kick-start the process by coming up with the ideas that are presented to the rest of the organisation (units) for brainstorming. The assumption here is that senior executives in the various business units within the organisation are expected to possess enormous amount of knowledge about the business of the organisation and should be capable of making well-informed recommendations in terms of what it should be doing and where it should be going.

But even more importantly, there is an understanding or expectation that the units' involvement in the planning is informed by the fact that they will be involved in the implementation of the plans. Without the units' support and buy-in experience has shown that even some of the most brilliant strategies can fail, because it is supposed to be in the units where the skills, the people and other resources reside for successful implementation of any plan.

Different organisations have unique strategic planning and management processes, with the outcome being the strategic plan made up of the direction statement detailing the vision, mission, business definition, core competencies and values; the strategic objectives which allow the organisation to measure how it is performing in those areas where it must achieve superior results; priority issues, which are the organisation's primary instruments of action such as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; and actions plans which are the priority issues that get translated into high-level action plans in terms of the specific activities to be undertaken (Mentor, 2009, 8).

Although there are different opinions on the strategic planning and management process by different authors, Mentor's approached has been followed here for purposes of illustration. According to Mentor (2009), a strategic planning and management processes begins with

extensive research and analysis that helps senior management to narrow down alternatives and come up with a very short list of priorities that needs to be successfully implemented in the long term. For each priority issue the various units are expected to come up with high-level action plans for execution. The strategic planning and management process might appear very simple and straightforward, but in fact it is an iterative process, that takes lots of time and back and forth communications between the various parties, to examine, discuss and refine the issues until all are satisfied with the end result.

According to Mentor (2009, 16) the strategic planning and management process follows the approach is as detailed below:

- *Analyzing internal and external factors*

  Analyzing both the internal and external factors is essential because that clarifies the business world in which the business units will be operating, thereby making it easier for them to come up with a more clearer picture of the future wanted. The analysis assesses the future impact on the organisation of trends and forces occurring in the internal and external environments. Internal trends and forces include the core competencies, core processes, financial measures, key results areas, management and organisational culture. External trends and forces include the market, technology, legislation, partnerships and culture.

- *Performing a SWOT analysis*

  The analysis of the internal and external factors assists the organisation in identifying strengths (to be bolstered), weaknesses (to be fixed), opportunities (to be capitalized on) and threats (to be mitigated). The analysis will help the organisation in identifying threats that may prevent it from achieving its vision and taking advantage of opportunities that present themselves. Through brainstorming and intense debates some priority issues will begin to emerge for actions to be taken.

- *Drafting priority issues*

  From the SWOT analysis the priority issues that emerge will be evaluated and selecting those that have the most positive impact on the long term direction of the organisation. After lengthy discussions and debates unit leaders will identify the top three or four priorities for senior management to review and then using pre-determined criteria narrow the total organisational priorities.

- *Developing high-level action plans*

After approval of priority issues, they are then delegated to the units for high-level actions plans to be developed indicating objectives, tasks, time frames, responsible persons and other requirements. Once these high-level unit action plans are approved a resource allocation process is undertaken for the plans to be carried out. Central to the resource allocation process, is senior management's responsibility to ensure that there is alignment of each unit's action plan with the corporate strategy.\

- *Finalizing the plans*

After a general agreement among the senior management team about the finality of the process has been reached, the corporate direction statement is refined and the high level objectives clarified and used to summarise the organisation's overarching initiatives. Units may also decide to draft their own direction statements and high level objectives that summarise their own efforts over the long term. Once this stage of the process has been reached managers in the various units will continue to review, assess and adjust the strategic plan on an on-going basis as circumstances change. Internal and external factors will be reviewed and if they remain constant, there will be no need to make adjustments, but where these factors change significantly then the plan will have to be evaluated and be changed.

3.5.2   Monitoring implementation of strategy

The strategy formulation part is the easier of the strategic planning and management processes. To a large degree people get this part right and often struggle when it comes to implementation and monitoring or even controlling for that matter. Pearce and Robinson (2000) argue that because strategies are forward looking, designed to be accomplished several years into the future, and based on management assumptions about numerous events that have not yet occurred, then the question arises – how then should managers control strategy? Traditionally the approach of controlling was very basic as you only had to compare the actual results against a standard that had been pre-determined – i.e. after work has been done, the manager evaluates it and then uses that evaluation as input to control further work. This approach according to Pearce and Robinson has its place, and it is inappropriate as a means for controlling strategy, especially given the fact that the full execution of a strategy often takes five or more years. During the execution period, many changes occur that have major ramifications for the strategy's ultimate success, prompting the traditional approaches to control to be replaced by an approach that recognises the unique control needs of long term strategies.

Pearce and Robinson contend that strategic control is concerned with tracking strategy as it is being implemented, detecting problems or changes in its underlying premises, and making necessary adjustments. In contrast to post-action control, strategic control is concerned with guiding action as that action is taking place and when the end result is still several years off. Pearce and Robinson hold the view that managers responsible for the success of a strategy typically are concerned with two sets of questions: (1) Are we moving in the proper direction i.e. are key things falling into place, are the assumptions about major trends and changes correct, are we doing the critical things that need to be done, should we adjust or abort the strategy? (2) How are we performing i.e. are objectives and schedules being met, are costs, revenues, and cash flows matching projections, do we need to make operational changes?

They further contend that because of the rapid accelerating change of the global marketplace of the last 10 years, which has made continuous improvement another aspect of strategic control in many business organisations, continuous improvement provides a way for organisations to provide strategic control that allows an organisation to respond more proactively and timely to rapid developments in hundreds of areas that influence a business's success.

3.6   The importance of strategic planning and management

According to Drucker (1999, 43) every organisation operates on a set of assumptions about what its business is, its objectives, how results are defines, its customers and what the customer value and are willing to pay. The role of strategy according to Drucker is to convert all these into performance thus enabling the organisation to achieve its desired results, especially during a period of rapid change and uncertainty.

Because of the uncertain environment in which organisations operate, organisations are exposed to vulnerability to business changes as well as competitor threats (Mentor, 2009, 5). A properly formulated strategy makes it easy for an organisation to sail through stormy water and distinguish itself from competitors. The strategy guides the organisation as it evolves by providing leaders and managers with information and direction to define their work and make the organisation competitive.

Drucker et al (2008, 4) cite the following as being central to the process of strategic planning and management.

3.6.1   Planning is not an event

"Planning is not an event but a continuous process of strengthening what works and abandoning what does not work, of making risk-taking decisions with the greatest knowledge of their potential effect, of setting objectives, appraising performance and results through systematic feedback and making adjustments as conditions change" (2008, 4). The importance of this roadmap cannot be overemphasized especially in terms of setting the goals, identifying potential risks that could derail the achievement of these goals and getting feedback as the process unfolds so that improvements can be made.

3.6.2   Strategic planning and management encourages constructive dissent

Drucker et al further contend that strategic planning and management is important because the process of strategy formulation encourages constructive dissent, especially given the important, risky and sometimes controversial decisions that have to be taken. Without proper encouragement of getting involved in strategic planning and management processes people have a tendency of avoiding typically difficult but vital discussions that are crucial for the success or failure of the organisation.

Drucker et al are of the view that with genuine participation a decision does not need to be sold because suggestions that come up during discussions can be incorporated, objections addressed and the decisions itself made a commitment of action.

3.6.3   Planning helps create tomorrow's society of citizens

Engagement in strategic planning and management is a commitment to developing the organisation as a leader, as this allows you to expand the vision by listening to stakeholders, encouraging constructive dissent, deciding whether to change the mission or whether to abandon programmes that have outlived their useful lives and redirect resources elsewhere and how to match opportunities with the organisation's competence and commitment. All these, says Drucker, require leadership to convert good intentions and knowledge into effective action, where everybody in the community takes responsibility, acts and is a leader.

3.7   Factors critical for effective strategic planning and management

From the discussions on the definition of strategy, strategic planning and management and why they are important for a successful organisation, two issues kept on cropping up that appear to be central to successful strategic planning and management processes and these are organisational leadership and stakeholders. In today's world where change is the only constant characterised by the internet and a global market place, the pace of change has increased exponentially, affecting all organisations.

Change has become an integral part of what leadership needs to deal with daily. The challenge for leadership is to galvanise commitment among people within an organisation as well as stakeholders outside the organisation to embrace change and implement strategies intended to position the organisation to do so. (Pearce and Robinson 2000, 417). Organisations exist because of their ability to create value and acceptable outcomes for various groups of stakeholders. These stakeholders are motivated to participate in an organisation if they receive inducements/incentives be they money, power and organisational status (Jones 1998, 16).

3.7.1   Organisational leadership

Leaders galvanize commitment to embrace change through three, interrelated activities viz.: clarifying the strategic intent, building an organisation and shaping organisational culture. Clarifying strategic intent means leaders help stakeholders embrace change by setting forth a clear vision of where the business strategy needs to take the organisation. Building an organisation entails leaders spending considerable time shaping and refining their organisational structure and making it function effectively to accomplish strategic intent. Since leaders are attempting to embrace change, they are often rebuilding and remaking their organisation to align it with the ever-changing environment and needs of the strategy and shaping organisational culture (Pearce and Robinson 2000, 416).

This, according to Pearce and Robinson (2000, 417) they do this by:

- Clarifying the strategic intent

  Pearce says that leaders help stakeholders embrace change by setting forth a clear vision of where the business strategy needs to take the organisation. Traditionally the concept of vision has been a description or picture of what the company could be that accommodates the needs of all stakeholders. The intensely competitive, rapidly changing global market

place has refined this to be targeting a very narrowly defined strategic intent – an articulation of a simple criterion or characterisation of what the company must become to establish and sustain global leadership.

- Building an organisation

Most leaders of organisations spend considerable time shaping and refining their organisational structure and making it function effectively to accomplish strategic intent. As most of the leaders attempt to embrace change, they are often rebuilding and remaking their organisation to align it with the ever-changing environment and needs of the strategy. And since embracing change often involves overcoming resistance to change, these leaders find themselves addressing problems like the following as they attempt to build or rebuild their organisation: ensuring a common understanding about organisational priorities; clarifying responsibilities among managers and organisational units; empowering newer managers and pushing authority lower in the organisation; uncovering and remedying problems in coordination and communication across the organisation; gaining the personal commitment and shared vision from managers throughout the organisation and keeping closely connected with 'what is going on in the organisation and with its customers'.

- Shaping organisational culture

Different authors define culture in different ways but central to each definition are the values and beliefs that are shared by a group of people. The following are some of the definitions of culture – Senior (1997, 100) quotes Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952, 181) who define culture thus: "culture consists in patterned ways of thinking, feeling, and reacting, acquired and transmitted mainly by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; their essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values". Rose and Lawton (1999, 279) quote Wilson and Rosenfield (1990) who define culture as "The basic values, ideologies and assumptions…which guide and fashion individual and business behaviour. These values are evident in more tangible factors such as stories, ritual, language and jargon, office decoration and lay-out and prevailing modes of dress amongst staff".

At the business level it is also important to develop organisation-wide values, and specific norms and rules, which allow the organisation to combine and use resources to the best advantage. This leads to the need to define organisational culture so as to understand how people in various functions within an organisation share values and beliefs in carrying out the business of their organisation. Jones (1998, 176) defines organisational culture as "a set of shared values and norms that control organisational members' interactions with each other and with suppliers, customers and other people outside the organization". Rose and Lawton (1999, 279) define organisational culture as "a set of beliefs, norms and values which forms the basis of collaborative human behaviour and makes human actions to some extent predictable and directed towards a set of commonly held purposes or the maintenance of some commonly accepted state". From these definitions it has become apparent why many managers and organisational leaders engage with organisational culture. The logic appears to be that if they can understand, why groups of people think and behave as they do, then there is the prospect that they may be able to influence their thought and behaviour patterns in such a way that the organisation can perform better.

The general expectation is that leaders know very well that the values and beliefs shared throughout the organisation will shape how the work of the organisation is done. And when attempting to embrace accelerated change, reshaping their organisation's culture is an activity that occupies considerable time of most leaders. Leaders use reward systems, symbols and structure among other means to shape the organisation's culture. As leaders clarify their strategic intent, build and organisation and shape their organisation's culture, they look to one key element to help – their management team throughout their organisation.

According to Pearce and Robinson (2000, 418), organisational culture "is the set of important assumptions (often unstated) that members of an organization share in common". Every organization has its own culture and this can be equated to an individual's personality. Pearce and Robinson are of the view that in much the same way as personality influences the behaviour of an individual, the shared assumptions (beliefs and values) in an organisation influence opinions and actions within that organisation.

They further contend that a member of an organisation cannot simply be aware of the organisation's beliefs and values without sharing them in a manner that is personally

significant way, because those beliefs and values have more personal meaning. Generally, members of an organisation view such beliefs and values as a guide to appropriate behaviour and comply with them, thereby becoming fundamentally committed to the beliefs and values. Pearce and Robinson noted that leaders in organisations attempt to manage and create distinct culture through a variety of ways, the most common ways being (1) to emphasize themes or dominant values by building strategies around distinctive competitive advantages they possess or seek, such as quality, differentiation, cost advantages and speed.

Insightful leaders nurture dominant values within their organisation so as to reinforce competitive advantages that they seek to maintain or build. (2) Organisations with strong cultures know exactly what their beliefs and values need to be and make a deliberate effort of shaping those beliefs very seriously to ensure that these values that they espouse under gird the strategies they employ. (3) Adapt some very common themes in their unique ways where the most typical beliefs that shape the organisational culture include: e.g. a belief in being the best; superior quality or service; the importance of people as individuals and a faith in their ability to make a strong contribution etc.

3.7.2   Organisational stakeholders

Stakeholders are very important to any organisation and generally are motivated to participate in the organisation's affairs if they receive inducements that exceed the value of the contributions they are required to make, according to Jones (1998, 17). Jones has identified two main groups of organisational stakeholders viz inside stakeholder and outside stakeholders.

- Inside stakeholders

  Inside stakeholders include shareholders whose claim on organisational resources is often considered superior to the claims of other inside stakeholders because of the investment they make for which they expect a return. Managers and staff whose contributions are skills they use to direct the organisation's response to pressures from within and outside the organisation.

- Outside stakeholders

Outside stakeholders include customers who are usually an organisation's largest stakeholder group; suppliers another important outside stakeholder group, who contribute to the organisation by providing reliable raw materials and component parts that allow the organisation to reduce uncertainty in its technical production operations and thus reduce production costs; the government makes contribution to the organisation by standardizing regulations so that they apply to all companies and no company can obtain an unfair competitive advantage and it also controls the rules of good business practice; local communities have a stake in the performance of organisations because the general economic well-being of a community is strongly affected by the success or failure of local businesses and the general public wants corporations to act in a socially responsible way.

- Managing stakeholders

According to Lawton (1999, 221), public services are nowadays being delivered through a range of public, private and voluntary sector organisations, either acting alone or as partners in a network of service delivery agencies. The challenge that managers face is how to manage the interactions with the various service delivery agencies through negotiation, bargaining, co-operation and control. Problems of coordination increase as different service delivery agencies pursue different goals using different structures and with different cultures. Lawton holds the view that in the private sector, networks are considered to be an ever-growing aspect of the business environment because of organisational revolution that has taken place with multi-level, vertically integrated hierarchies having given way to clusters of downsized, focused business units coordinated by market mechanisms.

Lawton (1999, 225) refers to Snow et al (1992) about the move towards the business network which is being driven by globalization and technological change, deregulation, workforce demographics and advances in communication and computer technologies.

According to Lawton, Snow et al (1992) have identified three different types of networks and they are: (1) internal networks which are created to obtain market benefits without engaging in outsourcing and are characterised by a central unit that establishes clear performance measures for each division and compare it to that of outside suppliers, (2) stable networks which exist where assets are owned by several firms, which may be dominated by one large core firm, but are all dedicated to a particular business, (3)

dynamic networks characterised by a small team of brokers at the center, which link together a group of specialist firms.

In looking at better ways of managing the multiplicity of role players Lawton (1999, 228) looked into the characteristics of network relationships and concept of community focus, and the applicability of each to the service delivery environment as follows:

o Characteristics of network relationships:

Lawton examined how the character of a network, including its location, access and resources can affect the relationship between the various organisations.

- Why enter into a relationship? – It may be necessary to enter into relationships with others if one organisation does not possess the necessary resources of finance, skill or information to deliver a service itself. An organisation may decide that its goals are best achieved with the assistance of other organisations. This will be easier to achieve if other organisations share a common set of values and purposes. However, voluntary organisations may seek some safeguards that will protect their freedom, to act and to retain their independence.

- What resources are available? – Resources include expertise and information, human resources and time, as well as financial resources and time. One group may come to dominate a network because of a concentration of information and expertise. At the same time, reciprocity is easier if such resources are evenly spread. An organisational asset that is much undervalued is that of time. The time that an individual or group can devote to participating in the network and building relations, will determine what can be contributed to and what can be gained from network participation. An organisation must invest scarce resources and energy when often the potential returns are not always easy to determine.

- What position is held in the network? – According to Lawton, the more central the position in the network the more important the member of the network with the one key factor being the control over resources. A position of centrality may allow greater control over other members of the network and the central actor may also be performing a different role from that of other members in the network. This can however be obviated by separating the strategy-making core from the service-delivery periphery.

- How easy is access? – The issue of access in the network is also dependent on whether each member in the network has access to other members or whether internal communications screened through the center, especially given the fact that information is a key network currency. Another network currency is trust, that is, the members need to be open in their dealings with each other. It is also important to know how easy it is for other groups to break into the network, because the tighter the network in terms of size, geography or policy area, the more the network will come to have characteristics of a community as discussed above.

- How do members view each other? – Perceptions of who is important, how the different groups and individuals view each other and the extent of the perceived importance are crucial. Central factors may be perceived to have greater potential for mobilizing resources controlled by others. At the same time respect for and an appreciation of other members' qualities will enhance cooperation. Different members of the network may also have different perceptions of the purposes of the network or the problems that networks are set up to resolve. Indeed there may be different perceptions concerning what problems exist let alone their solutions.

- What is to be gained by joining the network? – Presumably groups and individuals enter networks to gain some benefits either in the short or long term. A group may ask itself as to what does it give to benefit from network participation, as may entail giving up some autonomy, although perceived long term advantages may outweigh short-term considerations such as organisational legitimacy or the reduction of uncertainty say over future funding may offset any perceived loss of autonomy.

o The concept of community focus

With regard to networks, Lawton (1999, 225) said that the concept of a network covers a multiplicity of organisational linkages and public service managers are being increasingly encouraged to look outward to customers or clients or citizens and to engage in activities with the support of their local community. Whereas networks may not have a specific locality, many public service managers have responsibility for the

delivery of services to a particular locality, and this is where the concept of community focus becomes important in the management of stakeholders. The community focus is more bounded than a network would be and, because of this closeness, its characteristics may be different from those of a network. According to Lawton (1999, 226), community refers to "interpersonal ties that exist outside the household; residence in a common locality; activities and sentiments expressing some sense of solidarity".

There is a sense of social linkages binding people together with the focus being on the individual and on groups of individuals and the relationships between them. These relationships, Lawton contends, hinge upon shared feelings of sense of belonging; sense of solidarity; sense of continuity over time and a sense that the community is one into which it is difficult for the outsider to enter. A community may not have specific goals and may exist in and for its own sake rather than to serve particular purposes; there may also exist, different communities within the same geographical location based around race or religion.

Lawton is of the view that there are incentives for individuals to channel their special interests toward a common good, such as 'some concept of the community as the shared experience of place provides the justification of the locality as the arena for the exercise of citizenship' Lawton argues that it this membership of a community that provides opportunities to enhance participatory democracy, and in contrast to members of the private sector networks, the public services manager will not have a choice of entering or leaving the community in the same way that a private sector firm can enter or leave a particular market.

3.8   Conclusion

Different authors give different definitions to strategic planning and strategic management but end up with the same outcome in terms of what strategic planning and management seeks to achieve - to enable organisations to evaluate, select, and implement alternatives for rendering effective services and providing goods. It has become clear how important it is for any organisation to undertake a process of strategic planning and management. This process helps to clarify the general direction (strategic intent) to be taken by the organisation in

achieving its purpose; it motivates and galvanises action on all the people directly or indirectly involved with the organisation and helps to coordinate the actions of these people. Two other key features of strategic planning and management are the time frames within which it must happen and the focus is on outcomes (what shareholder/public money is buying) rather than on inputs and outputs. A strategic plan is normally developed for a medium to long-term period in order to achieve a certain desired impact of the product/service offering for the community in which the organisation is situated.

Central to the process of undertaking a strategic planning and management process is the role of leadership within the organisation in initiating the process and establishing a guiding coalition to discuss the initial ideas and developing a document that the rest of the organisation (stakeholders) can engage on. Leaders spend considerable time shaping and refining their organisations in order to make it function effectively to accomplish strategic intent. This entails rebuilding and remaking their organisation in order to align it with the ever-changing environment and needs of the strategy.

Since leadership is about embracing change in the process of building the organisation, leaders have to find ways of embracing change and overcoming any form of resistance by ensuring a common understanding about organisational priorities; clarifying responsibilities among managers and organisational units; empowering newer managers and pushing authority lower in the organisation; uncovering and remedying problems in coordination and communication across the organisation etc. But even more importantly for strategic planning and management within any organisation is the issue of stakeholders especially the outside stakeholders who bring with them fresh ideas and different perspectives in terms of assessing the environmental opportunities and organisational capabilities that are crucial for effective delivery of services and goods. According to Lawton (1999), the challenge that managers face is how to manage the interactions with the various service delivery agencies through negotiation, bargaining, co-operation and control. Problems of coordination increase as different service delivery agencies pursue different goals using different structures and with different cultures.

But it is not service delivery agencies only that complicate the service delivery equation because there are recipients of the service (customers, users, beneficiaries) who need to have a reasonable say in what services and goods are required and how these services and goods should be provided. Service delivery managers have to know and understand ways of

managing the multiplicity of stakeholders. This is where the concept of networks becomes important because people's involvement in any form of network is determined by a number of issues including availability of resources, position in the network, easy of entry and how various players view each other (Jones, 1998). Public service managers have to find ways of engaging their customers and ensure that they gain their support whether it be by way of networks which may not have a specific locality or a community which may not have specific goals and may exist in and for its own sake rather than to serve particular purposes. Whether it is a network or a community, there are always incentives for individuals to channel their special interests toward a common good. These incentives and memberships provide opportunities to enhance participatory democracy, and according to Lawton (1999), in contrast to members of the private sector networks, the public services manager will not have a choice of entering or leaving the community in the same way that a private sector firm can enter or leave a particular market.

Public services are now delivered through a range of public, private and voluntary sector organisations, either acting alone or as partners in a network of service delivery agencies. A multiplicity of stakeholders exists with competing interests in the various organisations that provide goods and services. The challenge that managers face is how to manage the interactions with the various stakeholders including service delivery agencies through negotiation, bargaining, co-operation and control. Problems of coordination increase as different stakeholders (service delivery agencies and power groups), pursue different goals using different structures and with different cultures. Strategic planning and management plays a crucial role in figuring ways of structuring the interactions, negotiations and co-operation amongst and between the various stakeholders.

The purpose of looking into the private sector perspective regarding strategic planning and management was to identify best practices and apply this to the public sector and not to try and run a local authority or service delivery agencies like private sector entities, given their (local authorities) developmental mandate. Using private sector best practices, strategic planning and management in local government can then be enhanced through broad-based stakeholder participation to ensure legitimacy, inclusiveness of and buy-in in the resource determination, allocation and deployment processes. The municipality would still provide the

required leadership in galvanizing participation and coordinating the various processes in line with the prescripts of democratic and developmental local government.

The chapter that follows (Chapter 4) looks at public service management and the political themes that inform the packaging and delivery of services, the socio-economic factors at play and their implications for public service managers. Public services are defined as public goods making them very distinct because of the absence of market forces and their collective consumption, amongst others (Rose and Lawton, 1999). Unlike in the private sector the determination of performance measures appears to be very problematic because of the infusion of political themes into the delivery of services.

Various forms of accountabilities are looked at given the fact that public services are funded from general and other forms of taxation. The role and importance of strategic planning and management in harnessing all the various factors with their public sector peculiarities and distinctiveness, is explored before focusing specifically on local government planning processes, in the provision of services.

Chapter 4

4 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

4.1 Public services management – contextual background

4.1.1 The political context of public services management

Politics is very important to public service managers because political management assumes greater salience for them than for many of their counter parts in the business sector, because political themes are generally reflected in the delivery of public services (Harrop, 1999, 4). "Public service management is about making democracy work", by creating conditions for the framework within which political discourse and the implementation of collective action can take place. Harrop (1999, 4) refers to the study by Willcocks and Harrow (1992) in which they identified eleven major differences between the management of the public services and that of private sector and these included: 'statutory and parliamentary regulation', 'the relative openness of government and decision-making' and 'responsiveness to political masters'.

The organisation and delivery of public services has been dramatically transformed in the 1980 and 1990s such that the traditional concept of 'public' and 'private' sectors has been diminished. Factors that contributed to this transformation include outright privatization, resource constraint, introduction of the so called 'business style of management' and the development of an intensely competitive performance culture (Harrop, 1999). He goes on to say that "public administration has given way to the new public management" with the ethic of selfless public service being replaced by the language of business, where local government 'social workers' have become 'care managers' and 'nursing sisters' have now become 'ward managers'. Despite all these, Harrop argues a case can still be made for the distinctiveness of public service management, which concerns itself with the "process of debating political priorities and arranging collective choice of the plurality of competing individual and group preferences in order to make democracy work". However, the tasks of public services management are broader compared to those of the private sector in that there is a need to maintain a balance between freedom and order.

Harrop (1999, 4) refers to Starling (1993) about the three core functions of management that are common to both public and business administration and they are: "(1) programme management (e.g. human resource management); (2) political management (e.g. politics, ethics, inter-agency relationships) and resource management (budgeting etc.)".

The relative importance of these activities varies, with political management occupying a much greater part of the public service manager's time than that of the private sector manager. The magnitude of cultural change within the public service has also been immense, with work practices in many areas of activity having been revolutionized and some of the assumptions that defined the very notion of public service undermined. Public servants for example had to embrace continuous innovation in information technology, the place of a public service professional and re-definitions of 'public' and 'private' etc. (Harrop, 1999, 4).

4.1.2   The social role of public services

Public service organisations exist so as to pursue the social policy goals of government (Rose, 1999, 63). Rose (1999, 64) referred to research conducted for the Department of International Development that offers a number of frameworks for the understanding of social policy, which are that social policy:

- As 'welfare through distribution' where the long-term welfare of citizens is served through transfer payments such as cash benefits to those judged to be in need;
- As human resource development where the welfare of the population is served by the provision of for example health care and education
- As a safety net where the destitute and vulnerable in the population are assisted by a variety of programmes including targeted benefits

Rose (1999, 64) further refers to Kieron and Walsh (1995) who argue the case for the public sector intervening in the provision of services due to failure of the market economy, and draws on economic theory and presents the following as the reasons for the failure of the markets:

- *Public goods*

  Public goods are those and services which are paid for and consumed collectively because their production may result in externalities (i.e. provide benefits to others than those who pay for or purchase them).

Education, police services and public transport are typical examples of public goods. Kieron and Walsh argued that the market economy is unable to provide such goods and services where even those who do not purchase can still benefit.

- *Increase in returns to scale*

    The production of certain goods and services may result in decreasing unit costs when they are produced in large quantities and a typical example is that of water, whose cost of provision decreases the more the number of people that you provide for. According to Kieron and Walsh having two parallel systems for provision of such a good or service in one locality could result in inefficiencies and the market economy might find that unattractive.

- *Merit goods*

    Merit goods are defined as those goods whose provision benefits society as a whole and if individuals are left to choose for themselves, they may under consume and again education is a typical example in terms of the skilled labour force that may also contribute to civil society. Kieron and Walsh argue that the state can intervene to ensure access is not restricted to those that have the purchasing power and inclination to obtain it.

- *Information asymmetries*

    Rose (1999, 65) quotes Wrigley and Mckevitt (1994) when they said that "professional status is achieved through extended training and education, with rigorous examination of competence in the given technical area. This process revolves around the profession having claim to ma body of expertise such as law, medicine, accounting, engineering etc." Professionals in the various areas of expertise have access to large amounts of complex information that is difficult to transfer to the user to make choices, thus giving the professional two roles of service provider and that of acting as agent of the client, because of the disproportionate amount of information that they have under their control. The markets on the other hand will simply assume that the client has the information and experience to make informed choices.

All these demonstrate the peculiarities of public services and how it is just not possible for the market economy to provide. These are the issues that need to be taken into account when formulating a strategic plan for the public sector, especially where provision by the private agencies is being considered. The market economy would certainly respond very differently to each of these, making proper delivery almost impossible.

4.1.3   Public services are distinctive

There are a number of proposals regarding the distinctiveness of public services and when examining some of the claims made took into account the fact that the arguments being made are supported by evidence; the arguments are applicable to all public services or to some services to varying degrees and because public services are subject to high levels of change, arguments of twenty years ago might not be applicable anymore (Rose, 1999, 69). The following are the claims being made about the distinctiveness of public services:

- *Distinctive purpose, conditions and task*

  Rose (1999, 70) refers to a study conducted by Stewart and Ranson (1988) that public organisations are given responsibilities that should be carried out with a specific public purpose. They give an example of the work of local authorities which they say is subject to relatively immediate political scrutiny by local councillors who oversee it and local users of services and taxpayers having access to meetings and key documents (as opposed to the private sector). This, they argue, reflects the many features of 'publicness', although admitting that there are other public services that are less exposed to scrutiny, meaning that there may be varying degrees of 'publicness' in public services. Rose (1999, 70) brings up in an additional dimension that was raised by Eliassin (1993) regarding the role of the manager vis-à-vis politicians and bureaucrats, with politicians being charged with the responsibility of setting goals and bureaucrats and professionals tasked with implementing them. Eliassin argues that managers are placed in the middle and need particular skills for dealing with this type of situation of being able to react immediately to shifts in priorities of the political leadership

- *Equity*

  According to Rose (1999, 71) the concept of equity raises questions about the distribution of services with competing claims for resources being made by geographical area, ethnic groups etc. Claims may also be made according to different principles such as market

efficiency being used as a criterion because it optimizes outcomes, or resources may be made available to those groups that have already made an effort in order to incentivise private contribution or resources allocated to areas of most need or even equally to all areas. In South Africa the Constitution and various pieces of legislation on local government, emphasize the issue of equity in service delivery in order to address, inter alia, socio-economic inequities.

- *That there is a distinctive public ethos*

  Rose (1999, 72) makes reference to Pratchett and Wingfield (1994, 31) that the existence of a distinctive public service ethos in local government is relatively recent and they explain this by saying that "there are certain deep-rooted values that underpin the culture of local government and inform the day to day activities of those employed and these values have always been and remain ill-defined, confused and ambiguous". Pratchett and Wingfield go on to say that within this ethos there are differentiations based on the various functions performed by local government and nature of professionalisation therein. The professional bodies that the staff belong to remain a primary source of the values making up the public service ethos. Also, the role played by the political authorities in creating an environment in which the ethos exist, provides a more definitive interpretation of the ethos. However such an ethos, Pratchett and Wingfield contend has been eroded by the introduction of new contractual forms of accountability, the decline in formal bureaucratic rules and fragmentation of organisations into business units and cost centers.

- *Public service organisations have complex and often competing objectives*

  People advocating for the adoption of private sector practices by the public sector in order to improve organisational efficiency, say so because they believe that private sector objectives are simpler and more clearly understood as compared to the more complex and sometime competing public sector objectives (Rose, 1999, 73). Rose (1999,73) refers to Metcalfe and Richards (1987) who are of the view that goal setting in public management is problematic because it is 'an inter-organizational process and not just an intra-organizational process' especially given the fact that objectives in government are sometimes difficult to define, are frequently in conflict and often subject to change. The complex and competing aspect can be demonstrated by an attempt to achieve efficiency in service delivery but without necessarily being effective i.e. achieving savings while

providing services to all. The inter-organisational aspect refers to the numerous stakeholders with varied and competing demands requiring public managers to be equitable in the allocation of resources and the different organisations (agencies) with different structures and cultures that must provide services in a coordinated manner. These require public service managers to adopt a pluralistic approach, which private sector strategic management approaches cannot cope with.

- *Public services are subject to high degrees of external controls*
  Public services are provided to multiples stakeholders with interest in the process as well as the outputs of the services. However the local authorities that provide these services are political institutions with democratically elected and locally accountable politicians responsible for prioritizing local choices. But even more importantly is the fact that these local authorities are prescribed to by legislation in terms of what to do and how to do it. In a number of instances priorities are subject to change to meet the short-term requirements of the politicians often at variance with rational resource allocation mechanism for meeting service delivery requirements (Rose, 1999, 73)

Conclusion

These arguments explain why public sector agencies have specific mandates, legislative and political, to deliver certain public good and services. In pursuing the distributive and welfare role on behalf of government, public sector agencies have to take into account certain unique situations that private sector agencies cannot afford to consider. For example a private sector entity will only deliver where there is demand and willingness to pay for the goods and services, but public sector agencies because of their welfare approach takes into account inequalities and inequities, geographically or on a racial basis. Performance measures are easy to develop and measure under private sector provision but under public provision political considerations sometimes cloud business imperatives. Accountability in the public sector is broader that it is in the private sector. All these make public services distinctive and the strategic planning and management processes need to take all the factors into account.

The social and economic factors are external to any organisation and to a large degree organisations have very little control over these factors. However it is important that when organisations, both public and private sector, develop their strategic plans, that they take these factors into account. Changes in the structure of the economy can change consumption

patterns and availability of resources to provide services at levels that people are accustomed to and changes in government or policy changes of the same government can alter the mode of delivery of public services. All these can affect either the demand or supply side of public services and public services managers need to be vigilant when undertaking planning processes for their organisations.

It is the responsibility of the leadership in an organisation to ensure that the strategic planning and management processes take account of these implications. Stakeholder consultation and buy-in will ensure that there is legitimacy to the decisions taken in deciding which services to prioritize for which areas or groups and which mode of delivery would best suit the needs of the organisations given a certain level of resource capacity.

4.1.4   Accountability

One of the key features of a democratic system of government is accountability. Accountability is required for officials to account to elected representatives and accountability by the elected representatives to the electorate. The private sector is not different either, with CEO being accountable to the board and the board being accountable to the shareholders.

Law (1999, 81) also observed that accountability is of equal concern to both the public and private sector organisations, despite the recent increase in emphasis on corporate governance in the private sector because of business scandals involving a number of private sector organisations. In private sector organisations, accountability is to a number of stakeholders that include shareholders, board of directors and public authorities. Although private sector organisations are accountable for different aspects of performance, the measurement of performance is straightforward in terms of the goals to be met and assessed. However in public services organisations the goals set by politicians are sometimes complex and ill defined and can be difficult to measure. The main difference in accountability between the private and public sector organisations is that the basis of accountability in the public sector is democratic, where the defining feature is that they are funded through general taxation and the public through elected representatives expect some form of accountability in one of the following ways (Law, 1999, 81):

- *Political accountability*

According to Law (1999, 83) there are two aspects of political accountability relevant to public services organisations and they are accountability to the public and accountability to parliament. In a system of representative democracy politicians are accountable to the public who may impose sanctions through the ballot if they are dissatisfied with their performance. Law goes on to say that the effectiveness of this mechanism of accountability at the local level has been called into question, mainly because of the lack of party competition.

Another important way of accounting to the public is the provision of information in the form of manifesto, media citizen charters etc. so that they can make judgement on the performance of politicians. Political accountability to parliament is traditionally through the doctrine of ministerial and cabinet responsibility for the operation of the various government departments and their equivalents at the local government level.

- *Managerial accountability*

In contrast to political accountability that is outward focused, internal accountability is done through managerial accountability by staff within the organisation. In the public sector, this is done through the traditional model operating through a hierarchy, where the lowest level accounts to the superior until the highest level of municipal manager is reached (Law, 1999, 86).

The hierarchical model of accountability has structures put into place through the creation of business units and internal markets that give managers the freedom to manage as they see fit. According to Law (1999, 86) the creation of business units and internal markets has led to the fragmentation of traditional bureaucratic organisations, although the new structures are said to have created efficiency, responsiveness and accountability. Managerial accountability is exercised by line managers who in turn are accountable to the politicians for services delivered based on objectives set by the politicians and regularly reviewed for performance.

- *Legal accountability*

The legal system also provides for public services organisations to account for their actions by individuals bringing civil action against the organisation or where issues of public law are involved through statutory appeal procedures and judicial review. Statutes provide leave for appeal to the courts by individuals and this is not provided for individuals can seek an application for judicial review. Law (1999, 88) does mention the fact that the legal accountability for public services differs from that of the private sector, such as in local government which operates under the doctrine of 'ultra vires', where councils may do only what they are empowered to do.

In instances where they called to account in court through judicial review they criteria is not just legal but also procedural propriety and rationality on the part of decision makers. Criticism has been leveled at the doctrine of 'ultra vires' in the operation of legal accountability because it was said that it restricts local government and thereby hampers development and discourages enterprise. The system of judicial review has also been criticized in that the courts have been too willing to accept pleas of public interest immunity which means that government documents need not be disclosed to applicants for judicial review if sensitive issues of national security are raised (Law, 1999, 88).

- *Professional accountability*

  With regard to professional accountability, Law (1999, 90) refers to Laffin (1990) about the fact that process of delivering public services has traditionally been perceived as so complex that a heavy reliance was placed on professional judgement where only professionals could hold other professionals accountable through a variety of mechanisms. Firstly where a professional body would define and monitor standards and had the authority of withdrawing the right to practice. Secondly where standards are set and monitored through inspections, the primary role of which was to promote good practice through advice and support. Thirdly through the use of an internal mechanism of accountability, to the values of the profession that are inculcated through training to obtain professional status. The value system ensured that commitment is placed on the client before other considerations.

Conclusion

A culture of accountability needs to be created at all levels of an organisation to ensure that service or product offerings are provided as promised, that taxpayers and shareholder monies are used for the intended purpose and that organisations pursue their defined mandate in serving communities. Strategic planning and management is about setting objectives which need to be achieved within certain timeframes and by specific role players. Strategic planning and management is about establishing measures for performance. All these processes are about holding people accountable.

Local government in South Africa appears to be facing enormous challenges despite various mechanisms (legal and otherwise) that have been put into place to ensure that accountability happens. The spade of service delivery protests including lack of accountability by elected office bearers shows a lack of understanding by the electorate of a system of competitive democratic politics, where parties should be elected on the basis of their service offering as per their manifesto for which they must be held accountable. Accountability challenges also abound at the bureaucratic level as well, as highlighted by unfavourable audit opinions contained in Auditor-General annual reports. Poor planning and execution of service delivery programmes resulting in thousands of rand in fruitless and wasteful expenditure for which no one appears to be held accountable are the order of the day at most municipalities.

4.2   Strategic planning and management processes in the public sector

Given advancement in management practices and technology, there is very little to separate private and public provision of goods and services. The adoption of private sector practices including strategic planning and management has made some public sector organisations more efficient and competitive in the delivery of public goods and services. Public and non-profit organisations are nowadays operating in environments that are not only uncertain but are interconnected such that changes in one area affect various other areas in a manner never seen before, observed Bryson (2004, 1). Bryson went on to say that this interconnectedness and uncertainty can be dealt with in a four ways and these are firstly that organisations need to think, act and learn strategically like never before. Secondly he said that they must translate their insights into effective strategies in order to cope with changed circumstances. Thirdly they must develop rational ways for building good foundations for the adoption and implementation of their strategies. Fourthly he said they should build coalitions that are large and strong enough to adopt desirable strategies capable of being protected during

implementation. Bryson says that public organisations engage in strategic planning in order to create value by producing enterprises, policies, programs, projects, services that advance the public interest and common good at reasonable cost (Bryson, 2004, 1).

Strategic planning focuses on an organisation where most of the decision makers are insiders with considerable amount of some information on the decisions being gathered from outside as is normally the case with public agencies, local government and non-government organisations that deliver public services. However Bryson (2004, 35) says that there are instances where strategic planning might focus on a function that crosses organisational or even governmental boundaries or a community and almost all key decision makers are outsiders. In situations such as these, Bryson argues, focus should be on how to organize thought, action and learning collaboratively within and among the various groups because no single person or institution is in charge or has responsibility to act (2004, 35).

Organising an effective strategic planning process among the various power groups might turn out to be a serious challenge and if anything Bryson further contends that, more time will be needed to organize e.g. forums for discussion involving diverse constituencies as well as negotiating agreements in various areas and coordinating activities of the various stakeholders.

Bryson (2004, 11) cites the following as the benefits that result from public organisations engaging in strategic planning:

- To promote strategic thinking, acting and learning through systematic information gathering about the organisation's internal and external environments, the various actors and their interests, thoughtful examination of successes and failures while clarifying the future direction and establishing priorities.

- To improve decision-making by focusing attention on crucial issues and challenges facing the organisation and helping decision makers to develop action plans for dealing effectively with the challenges

- To enhance organisational effectiveness by clarifying and addressing major organisational issues while responding wisely to internal and external demands and pressures and dealing effectively with rapidly changing circumstances

- To enhance effectiveness of broader societal systems by helping the organisation to take the broader environment into account and help figure out how to partner with other organisations to jointly create better environments.

4.2.1   Clarification of organisational mandates

The strategic planning process in the public sector is very much the same as the process followed when doing strategic planning in the private sector other than the fact that in the public sector the process starts with clarification of the organisational mandate in the form of various requirements, restrictions, expectations, pressures and constraints that the organisation faces. The formal mandate of the organisation would normally be contained in the relevant legislation, policies, ordinances, charters, articles.

The informal mandates of a public organisation are typically political mandates and or expectations from key stakeholders and according to Bryson (2004, 97) organisations sometimes make one or three fundamental mistakes regarding the political mandate. First sometimes organisations are either unable to articulate the mandate or they just do not know what to do. Secondly organisations might think they are more tightly constrained in their actions than they actually are and thirdly organisations sometimes think that if they are not explicitly told to do something, they are not allowed to do it.

Bryson (2004) says that in democratic states public organisations are chartered by the state to create public value through a number of overlapping activities at the appropriate levels. These organisations derive their legitimacy from the broader society to pursue public purposes and have to find ways of showing that their operations can indeed create value, lest they lose social justification for their existence. These activities are many and include but not limited to creating open and transparent government, providing needed public goods that markets cannot provide on their own, addressing problems created by asymmetries in information availability, distribution or use, providing public goods and services in a cost effective manner, making use of civic-minded public servants and their professional expertise etc.

4.2.2   Mission, values and stakeholder analysis

Once the mandates have been identified and clarified, this paves the way for stakeholder analysis and defining the mission and values of the organisation in terms of what should be done, how it should be done and why it should be done. Clarification of the mission specifies

the purpose of the organisation and its philosophy and values that guides it and this is the same as the process followed by private sector organisations when defining their mission and no further discussion will be entered into regarding the mission.

Stakeholder analysis according to Bryson (2004, 107) provides useful information for the preparation of the mission statement and effective strategies. Bryson argues that if an organisation had to do one thing when it came to strategic planning, that one thing should be stakeholder analysis because of its critical importance to both the private and public organisations. He goes on to say that if an organisation knows whom its stakeholders are and what criteria they use for judging the organisation in terms of performance, then the organisation will certainly know how to satisfy those stakeholders. Bryson (2004, 109) says the first step in the analysis of stakeholders is to identify them and because they are numerous and contest for its attention, resources and output, it is critical that one gets a precise picture of the players in the arena. Once they have been identified they need to be differentiated so that the different expectations that they place on the organisation can be responded to.

Special provision should also be made for future generations when responding to the needs of stakeholders by ensuring that whatever is done now with available resources is sustainable going forward. But even more importantly, Bryson (2004, 110) argues, is the identification of key employee groups to ensure organisational responses are sufficiently differentiated to satisfy each group. The second step in stakeholder analysis is to specify the criteria the stakeholders use in assessing organisational performance and this can be done by asking the stakeholders themselves. The third step entails judging how well the organisation performs against the stakeholder criteria

The rest of the strategic planning processes are the same as those followed in the private sector and for the sake of completeness they will be listed without necessarily going into detailed discussions. They assessment of external and internal environments; identifying strategic issues facing the organisation; formulating strategies to manage the issues; adopting the strategies and strategic plan and lastly establishing and effective organisational vision before developing an implementation plan.

4.3   Strategic planning and management at local government level

Local government is the sphere or tier of government that is closest to the people regarding delivery of service and if anything it is in fact the first port of call. In a system of government

where the majority governs (democracy) there are open and transparent processes for decision-making and various forms of accountability exist to ensure that this system of government works as intended. Delivery of services takes place once an elaborate planning process has been completed that includes the identification of needs, the determination of the required resources for delivering on the identified needs. Sometimes resources are not adequate for the needs that have been determined and this requires a prioritisation process where needs are provided on a phased basis, so that over a period of time everyone is provided for.

Griffin (2000, 8) writes that cities worldwide, including Barcelona in Spain, Brisbane in Australia, Cities of Sunnyvale and Brea in the USA, Quebec in Canada have used strategic planning to influence and guide change and growth in their communities. Benefits include: engagement and representation of all sectors of the community in determining the future; a framework for public investment and activity which is validated against publicly owned long term objectives; an holistic view of the city so interdependencies and synergies are optimized through partnerships; strengthened arguments in support of reform or support from central government; a shared direction and focus which can be used to attract investment; redirection of resources to priority areas that deliver on the strategy and engagement of local government with its community and the pursuit of shared goals. Griffin (2000, 9) goes on to write that the strategic planning process entails asking very questions by those engaging in the processes and these include: who are the stakeholders who need to be involved; what techniques could be used to retain their ownership of the process; what might make it difficult to achieve that ownership and consistent involvement and how could those difficulties be overcome?

The Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG, 2005, 10) commented on international experience from legal and policy arrangements for citizens' participation in different countries around the world, that showed citizen and community participation is an essential part of effective and accountable governance at local level. This experience has shown that one way of achieving successful and lasting models to ensure that citizen participation takes place is through establishing structured and institutional frameworks for participatory local governance. However citizens need to see these institutional frameworks legitimate and credible, that there is a political commitment to their implementation and they have legal status.

These frameworks will certainly not work whenever there are attempts to co-opt independent and legitimate voices within civil society; and that while there appears to be political commitment to the model; the system exists only in principle (that is it sounds good on paper) but when it comes to carrying it out, the necessary resources are not available. In various discussions with key role players about local government, the DPLG came realize that workable principles for participation include bringing citizens more effectively on board when it comes to local governance and development; making government more responsive to the people's needs and aspirations; empowering citizens to fulfill their potential as partners with government; deepening democracy beyond the representative dimension into a more participatory system.

4.3.1   Organisational leadership - The leadership role of local authorities in strategic planning and management

Private sector strategic planning processes revealed the importance of organisational leadership and stakeholders in the visioning process. The same can be said about strategic planning processes in public sector and at the local government level in particular. Any community visioning exercise, if it is to reflect the views of the community, needs to engage the public in the process and promote citizen responsibility and ownership (Griffin, 2000, 7). Ideally each identified group of stakeholders in the community should be encouraged to participate in a process that achieves an agreed vision for the future.

To do this they will need to be provided with data relating to trends in the physical, environmental, social and economic environment of the city and the likely future scenarios. Local government is only one stakeholder in a group of stakeholders that influence a city or governed area. Other stakeholders include community groups, non-governmental agencies, the private sector, central government, academia etc. Given its unique position as representative of the community, a local government can become the focal point for and take the leadership role in encouraging stakeholders to take responsibility for their own unique roles in the development and success of a community. Elected representatives in an environment where they are free of day-to-day management as a result of separating the governance and management roles can shift their energies to strategy, policy and planning and monitoring achievement of strategic goals.

Griffin (2000, 7) is of the view that the local authority having assumed the leadership role and should take the responsibility for providing this information by gathering statistics from all sources and commissioning specific research or arranging specific events to enhance understanding for informed debate and decision-making. It is essential to capture all ideas from all sectors of the community and to encourage the community to exercise judgement on options and risks and conflicts to enable them to make trade-offs. As the priority options become more refined and concrete, costs need to be worked out for choices to be made with the understanding of implicated future public funding needs. According to Griffin (2000, 7), local authorities have devised many ways to engage the public in strategic planning including arrangement of visioning party days, workshops, school events, neighbourhood events etc.

Detailed preparation and advance planning and distribution of material is essential for this process and a strategic visioning process can take 1-2 years if it is to result in a product that has ownership wider than the local authority. It takes planning, organisation and resources to succeed in avoiding a process in which only the habitually active communities are involved, and it is essential to avoid capture by pressure groups by providing creative means for all the community to participate, avoiding reliance on traditional meetings (Griffin, 2000, 7).

Griffin further observed that one of the risks associated with a participative process, is the issue of politicians feeling their decision making roles are being undermined but this he says can be overcome by explaining the distinction between strategic vision of the city (a city development strategy) and a strategic plan for the local authority based on that vision; and encouraging the mayor and elected representatives to see the leadership role they can perform in both activities. "Production of an unrealistic vision and strategy should be discouraged through asking questions throughout the process such as 'what would an ideal solution enable people to do?', 'are there some things we have in common?', 'what else could we do?', 'what would happen if we chose that path?', 'is this fair and just and does this create inequity?', 'who will pay for this and is it affordable'?" (Griffin, 2000,8). Having achieved agreement to the strategic vision for the community, the local government then needs to produce its own long term (10 year) strategic plan and proposed actions for delivering on the vision and to encourage the engagement of the other stakeholders as partners.

The importance of organisational leadership was also demonstrated in study carried on participatory processes on the City of Porto Alegre, in Brazil, by Abers (2000, 65) who noted

that whenever governments anywhere took the lead seeking to create empowering participatory policies, they were normally confronted by problems associated with political resources to implement participation and these problems include: financial constraints, differences of opinion with public employees and sometimes the party hierarchies and economic and political elites that are used to influencing government policies.

Abers (2000, 65) mentioned a school of thought that argued that if participatory policies were to genuinely empower the excluded, they should not be initiated from above but must result from bottom-up initiatives without state interference, implying that state actors (in a leadership role) cannot play any role in changing traditional governing structures to help civic organisations that represent the marginalised groups to participate meaningfully in civic matters.

Abers however, held a different view and after examining three problems of participation (implementation, inequalities and cooptation) and seeking to explain "how in the case of Porto Alegre a state-initiated policy (by providing leadership) succeeded in empowering disadvantaged groups by creating citizen forums under citizen control; fostered participation in those forums of economically disadvantaged and historically un-mobilized groups and to a large extent created an environment in which those groups mobilized autonomously, even to the point of challenging the goals of the very government actors that had created the participatory space in the first place" (Abers, 2000, 12).

Leadership roles demonstrated by the City Government in Porto Alegre included:

- To avoid being engulfed in day-to-day issues of governing, the City government's new political strategy was to define projects and learn how to evaluate the broader political conditions that facilitated or inhibited implementation. Using strategic planning as a tool, the government identified obstacles and changed course where necessary without losing sight of the broader project. The City government listed a number of priorities that included neighbourhood infrastructure and the role of popular participation in the government's pursuit of its priorities. To this end the government and participants agreed on a set of rules for prioritizing projects and distributing funds rather than coming up with a list of demands (Abers, 2000, 79).

- At large assemblies which were held twice a year the administration presented basic information to participants. During preparatory meetings, participants in the various neighbourhoods formulated initial lists of priorities for investment and the Regional Budget Forums negotiated on transforming those neighbourhood demands into region-wide lists of priorities. Although the administrative reforms put into place did not envisage the participatory budget process succeeding on such massive proportions, more and more people started participating and prioritising the kinds of investments that the administration saw as strategic. The administration also came to realise that if the participatory budget process was organised correctly, "it could be an instrument for integrating agency actions into unified government policy" while at the same time addressing one of the major factors, that inhibited government's capacity to deliver services effectively (Abers, 2000, 80).

- On one occasion during which the union went on strike because the municipality could not meet their wage demands, the administration used a clever strategy to pressure the union, by inviting municipal union leaders to attend the regional assemblies of the participatory budget. During the deliberations, the administration argued that if it met the unions' demands it would be unable to respond to the demands of other popular sectors. The union backed off. The peaceful relationship between the civil servants and the administration did not mean that the civil servants went along easily with the changes in decision-making that were brought about by the participatory budget policy, but they appreciated "the administration's invigorated governing capacity", anti-corruption initiatives and the investment in properly designed and well maintained projects (Abers, 2000, 82).

- In the case of Porto Alegre, the mayor and deputy mayor backed the participatory initiatives. Government actions were channeled through the Central Plan thus enabling it to gain control of information and planning that geared it toward strategically defined projects of investing in infrastructure in marginal areas. The centralization of decisions also enabled the mayor to transfer power over budget decisions to citizen forums because the mayor's office had control over the city agencies that actually carried out the budget expenditure. This challenged notions that all forms of centralization as 'authoritarian' and 'overly bureaucratic' and according to Rienner "the process of decentralizing decisions to the citizenry was compatible with the centralization of decisions within the bureaucratic

structure". The moral authority that the administration derived from the participatory process helped it to control what appeared to be a highly fragmented bureaucracy and in so doing increased transparency, accountability and administrative competence (Abers, 2000, 79).

Conclusion

Leadership plays a very important role at both the individual and institutional levels. Galvanizing support around a particular vision of an organisation requires strong leadership that people can believe in and have trust and confidence in. Leadership should have the capacity to build the organisation and develop a culture in terms of how things get done, including a culture of accountability at every level of the organisation.

But even more importantly, the leadership in Porto Alegre managed to demonstrate the need for transparency by making information on budgets and services freely available to citizens. Once they did this, there was no need to be answering any questions or providing additional information because they had earned the trust and confidence of those they led. Rules for prioritising projects and the distribution of funds were made known to all, with everyone knowing the details about when and how the projects in his/her area would be implemented. There was also proper interface with the ruling party leadership to ensure that the party manifesto in terms of promises to the citizens is being implemented. The mayor and deputy mayor took charge of the infrastructure investment programme thus being able to take decisions as and when needed based on the circumstances at hand.

4.3.2   Stakeholder involvement

Stakeholders form an important part of any organisation. Their varied and sometimes competing interests, influence the way decisions are taken, the way products and service are delivered and sometimes the way that power relations play themselves out. It is against this background that a framework be developed in terms of the role that each stakeholder plays in the organisation, the manner in which each stakeholder is engaged and communicated with.

- **Participatory principles underpinning stakeholder involvement**

    Kironde (2003) wrote that participatory processes in business management and public administration are well known and widely accepted and are being used with extensive

advantages. Participatory processes in decision-making, Lussugga continued, are equally advantageous and essential for effective urban management, because private and public investments and municipal services delivery affect the well being of all urban residents. Participatory decision-making processes he said, are crucial to good urban governance because they ensure transparency, accountability, equity, efficiency and sustainability.

Transparency because information, priorities, strategies and action plans, are open to all stakeholders in the city; accountability because by sharing in decisions, partners are accountable to the public and to each other with respect to the tasks they have committed themselves to; equity because groups are which usually excluded from decision-making processes have the opportunity to present their concerns and defend their interests and finally, efficiency because, information is shared and decisions are taken in common avoiding overlap or duplication of effort.

Kironde (2003, 8) listed the following as the general principles to be observed in ensuring that the process of participatory and visioning is a success:

o *"Inclusiveness*

Kironde says that it is important to identify all stakeholders at various local levels of urban authority. There are internal stakeholders at every level of the local government authority structure as well as external stakeholders. Internal stakeholders include men, women, children youth, the elderly and the socially and economically marginalised. These could be regrouped into other categories such as political viewpoints, professional interests, religious affiliation, economic activity etc. The other category is of stakeholders originating from outside of the local government authority structure and these include CBOs, NGOs, representatives of religious groups, business and political organisations, and representatives of district, regional, national or international organisations. When the views and interest of all these are fairly listened to, debated and emerging issues negotiated and some consequences reached and mainstreamed, the principle of inclusiveness will have been accommodated.

o *Consultation to reach consensus*

The purpose of consultation is to reach consensus, Lussugga observed. The first step could be by way of stakeholders through advocacy and lobbying, exchanging views

and information. Secondly stakeholders deliberate openly through public debate and presentations of issues of various community contexts. A consultation should be differentiated from the practice of leaders or officials taking ready-made decisions to communities for their endorsement.

It entails cross-fertilization of ideas and views between and among equal stakeholders so as to reach collective decisions. These will be mutually beneficial to all stakeholders because they will generate sustainability, eliminate actual and potential cases of conflicts and inculcate the building of democratic culture. Consultation also entails informal meetings and discussions among stakeholders with the view of reaching majority decision or general consensus on issues of common interest while taking into consideration the views of the minority and special groups.

o *Transparency*

Transparency is basic to effective involvement of stakeholders. This means information must flow from the authorities to the people through the use of formal channels of an organisation to disseminate and share information. Proper information must be given in advance to enable community members to make informed decisions.

o *Facilitation*

Facilitation involves enabling local stakeholders to take a leading role in doing things themselves; to be analysts; vision setters; planners; budgeters; implementers and evaluators of their own circumstances and resources and coming up with agreeable and workable solutions. Communities should be empowered to acquire basic management and technical skills to assist them in understanding and dealing with other stakeholders.

o *Efficiency*

The visioning should envisage the efficient use of resources, executing planned activities in accordance with the plan as agreed upon by the respective owners of that plan. It also aims at the appropriate and optimum use of resources to ensure the quality of the final product. Efficiency avoids overlaps and the duplication of efforts

through coordination, information sharing and common decision-making among stakeholders.

o *Empowerment*

Empowerment builds peoples' capacity to move from being objects and passive victims of social processes to the status of subject and active agents of change with power to decide, act and become real owners of their plans, budgets, maintaining and updating them. In particular, marginalised groups need empowerment and active inclusion to take up roles and come to the mainstream of activities as equal and responsible partners and stakeholders.

o *Equitability*

All stakeholders' interests and priorities should be considered. The stakeholders need to jointly and positively explore and identify their resources and how to share, manage and use them appropriately, ensuring fair, just and reasonable room for full and active productive participation.

o *Sustainability*

Visioning should ensure socio-economically viable plans which at the same time avoid the degradation of the resource base including the use of natural resources, water, flora, fauna and land. Emphasis should also be put on inter-generational equitable utilisation of stock resources through well-nurtured use.

o *Accountability*

Stakeholders should be accountable to the public and to each other for their shared decisions and tasks they have committed themselves to accomplish. There should be inbuilt mechanisms for follow-up, checks and balances, monitoring and evaluation based on clear distribution and demarcation of responsibilities and duties.

o *Vision*

A vision should be a reflection of a collective conceptualisation of the needs, opportunities, and dreams of the majority, but at the same time taking cognisance of minority views. The vision should be clearly understood and shared by all

stakeholders with clarity of intent and way forward and should be attractive enough for all stakeholders to take active interest and support it".

Conclusion

The key principles highlighted above describe the way in which participatory processes should be undertaken and form a baseline for assessing success with such processes. The one way in which there can be meaningful involvement by stakeholders in an organisation is when a framework is developed to guide the relationship between the stakeholders and the organisation. This enables everyone to understand their roles in the broader scheme of things and dispels any misgivings about decision-making processes. But even more importantly is the fact that stakeholders know what to expect from the organisation and the process that need to be followed, in determining whether things are happening as expected or not. Clarification of roles, manner of engagement and communication and transparency and openness in all decision-making processes can enhance an organisation's capacity to deliver. A bigger pool from which to draw ideas and experiences and the networking capacities that this big pool of stakeholders provide, is not only cost effective but also gives legitimacy to organisational processes.

Kironde's principles ties in very well with South Africa's local government integrated development planning principles. Some of these principles are included in the Constitution and various pieces of local government legislation. Needless to say that there are still some challenges in mustering participation that is inclusive and transparent, amongst others. Challenges include inadequate resource capacity, poor deployment of resources and lack of familiarity among ordinary South Africans with how a system of competitive democratic politics works. Currently voting takes place on the basis of "struggle credentials", rather than service delivery offering as per party manifestos.

These and many other challenges will hopefully be overcome over time with the gradual evolvement of local government, accompanied by stronger opposition politics and advances in electoral education to ordinary South Africans about what informs choices when voting.

- **Community participation, democratic accountability and systems of bottom-up planning**

In a study carried in the Manyame District of Zimbabwe, Schou (2000,2) found that prior to 1993 the system of local government, Zimbabwe was divided along racial lines with Rural Councils representing largely white commercial farming and business interests and the District Councils which represented black residents on communal land. In 1993 the two councils were amalgamated into one system of local government consisting of 57 Rural District Councils (RDCs) and given more responsibilities than their predecessors. The planning and development function of the local authority was shared with the Rural District Development Committee (RDDC) that was headed by the District Administrator responsible for preparing a draft version of the District Development Plan.

The planning process was bottom-up starting with the lowest-level tier of the system that was the Village Development Committees who after drawing up their plans, send them to the Ward Development Committees for consideration by the RDDC before preparing the draft version of the District Development Plan. The District Development Plan was approved in a joint session of the RDDC and the RDC, before being sent to the Provincial Development Committee to be incorporated into the Regional Development Plan. All Regional Development Plans were consolidated by the National Planning Commission in the office of the President. Schou made the following observations regarding the level of local government responsiveness to service delivery in the Manyame RDC:

o *Community participation and democratic accountability*

In Manyame, the 1993 elections were considered not successful in democratic terms in that participation was fifty percent of the eligible voters and the opposition parties' participation was very marginal.

The merger of Zimbabwe African People's Union with the Zimbabwe African National Union (PF) meant little if no opposition at all, and the absence of any electoral campaigning and political debates about development and related issues prior to the holding of elections made the situation even more untenable. However, subsequent to elections, links of consultation were established between the representatives and the electorates, as evidenced by 60% of the respondents who reported participation with the councillors on more than ten occasions in a year.

o *Systems of bottom up planning*

The poor workings of the bottom-up planning systems, in the Manyame RDC were instrumental in the low level of service delivery responsiveness in the council. There was limited input at the grassroots level in the planning process. Development plans were not the product of consultative processes between the councillors and the communities, but were rather prepared by councillors in cooperation with the council's technical staff.

Although councillors at the local level advocated for popular development priorities, they were unable to advocate for them adequately in the preparatory work of the District Development Plans. Community priorities were therefore not always reflected at the national level.

In another study carried out in the Kigoma/Ujiji Council in Tanzania Schou (2000, 3) found that local government in Tanzania was introduced after independence with popularly elected councils being the norm. Local governments were initially headed by chiefs and when this arrangement was abolished, elected members constituted the local district councils. These were also abolished after ten years and replaced with a local government system that had a strong regional administration in charge of district level matters. Councils in Tanzania are responsible for far more services than their counterparts in Zimbabwe and these included education, health, road activities, water supply community development, buildings, land, natural resources and trade.

The planning system in Tanzania goes through several stages that include District Administration, District Management Team and the Finance and Administration Committee, before reaching the District Development Committee which deliberates on the issues before presenting the plan to the full council for approval. Schou (2000, 5) made the following observations:

o *Community participation and democratic accountability*

Local government elections in the Kigoma/Ujiji Town Council were reported to have been relatively free and fair with an 80% voter turnout. Even more importantly was the fact that half of the council members elected were for the opposition party. Sixty percent of the respondents to the study reported that meetings with elected representative were held less than once a year.

o *Systems of bottom-up planning*

It was reported that systems of bottom-up planning work well in some aspects in Tanzania, characterised by high levels of organisational commitment and a planning system that works at district level and above. It should however be noted that aspects that worked well included priorities of the councillors at sub-district levels which were in line with popular priorities, although there was very little input at the grass root to inform council development priorities,. Aspects that did not work well included the low educational levels and lack of training for people at the grass root level that made it difficult for them to follow planning and budgeting processes. Central government was also limiting local council autonomy by providing planning and budgeting guidelines for determining distribution of development projects in the various sectors, which councillors were unable to challenge.

Schou (2000, 7) further made the following observations regarding democratic processes and stakeholder involvement in service delivery planning processes in the two local authorities:

o Although civil associations existed in both countries, they were considered very weak and had very little influence on local development policies. This was in contrast to the findings of Putnam et al, in a study in parts of Italy regarding the influence that the existence of civic associations have on local government's development agenda. Rather, Schou found that Mamdani's observations that modern civil associations in rural areas were weak in Africa to be very relevant in the two countries.

o Despite indications of well-functioning democracy in both councils certain aspects of the council democratic performance were found wanting and these included poor level of grass root participation in the planning processes at the sub-district levels and the apparent irrelevance of general discussions for members of the community on development issues that informs the planning agenda (no campaigning be electoral representatives).

o The planning processes in both councils were dominated by the councils' technical staff and central government agencies to the exclusion of popular input. This

according to Schou was the result of lack of organisational commitment, central government control of the planning processes and the lack of financial autonomy as evidenced by high central government transfers to fund local government development expenditure.

Schou (2000, 8) came to the conclusion that (in both countries) for democratic local governments to be responsive, it will require more than a high level of democratic accountability. Schou also observed the existence of weak organisational commitment, central government control over local planning and the council's limited financial autonomy as being crucial to lack of local government responsiveness. Low levels of grass roots participation in the planning processes and the weak democratic control of development policies in the two councils meant that there were weak accountability mechanisms between council and the electorate.

Conclusion

Community participation, democratic accountability and systems of bottom-up planning are central to any system of competitive democratic politics. Community participation gives legitimacy and authority (moral) to the outcome of any democratic process. It is important that an environment be created for voluntary participation where communities are exposed to debates about what is possible regarding delivery of services. A strong opposition is also required to provide voters with an alternative. In a system of competitive democratic politics the electorate is able to hold those that have been voted into office accountable politically and legally and the political officer bearers are able to hold the bureaucrats accountable legally, managerially and professionally in terms of delivering on the mandate of the organisation.

For community participation and democratic accountability to be effective, a system of bottom-up planning is required to ensure inclusivity, openness and transparency at the grass root level. Properly working systems of bottom-up planning also enable equitable distribution of resources in the delivery of services. Just as in the two countries an almost similar situation exists in South Africa, where limited financial resources at the local government level necessitates regular provincial and central government interventions and this significantly affects local government autonomy and organisational commitment in terms of what local government can do. Facilitation mechanisms to ensure meaningful

participation in the bottom-up planning processes, by consulting communities, empowering them to ensure effective participation and including them in key resource determination, allocation and deployment processes, appears not to be working very well given endless service delivery protests, post these community participation processes.

- **Stakeholder participation strategy**

Stakeholder participation strategy clearly spells out how the local authority will be reaching out to communities and other role players to engage them in matters that affect them. The participation strategy identifies the various stakeholders, their roles, manner of engagement and communication. Central to any system of competitive democratic politics will be a participation strategy by political parties to engage and communicate with their constituencies.

The Department of Communities and Local Government in the United Kingdom (2008), investigated through a longitudinal case study, a sample of twenty-three statements of community involvement (SCIs), stakeholder involvement in the spatial planning system, including new approaches to involvement, going beyond the traditional methods and more innovative and inclusive techniques. Stakeholder involvement has been a very important component of the planning system in the UK, as it was intended to improve delivery of basic services, thus ensuring that people's needs are being met. This enhanced the legitimacy among stakeholders of decisions made by local planning authorities, as well as achieving a sense of ownership of those decisions. SCIs became a feature of the process of producing development plans and were intended to set out standards for involving communities in the production of local development framework documents.

Criteria used for the assessment, included clarity of the SCI and length of the document, presentation, references to partnerships, strategies to save and effectively increase resources and the identification and engagement of hard to reach groups. The following observations were made:

o *Style and accessibility of statements of community involvement*
   Many of the SCIs reviewed were broad, generic, used complicated terminology, too long, vague in approaches to stakeholder involvement, included information that was

not relevant to the public. In some cases hard-to-reach groups were not mentioned and when the groups were listed there was no indication of how and when they will be engaged. Hard-to-reach groups included gypsies, travellers, people in hospitals, asylum seekers, refugees, homeless persons, students, tourists and commuters. There was also no indication of how individuals would be identified and engaged.

o *Innovative methods of involvement and hard-to-reach groups*

Traditional approaches of involvement tended to encourage communities members and stakeholders to 'come to us' to view plans and proposals, and innovative approaches took the opposite stance of 'going to the people' and localities and engaging in face to face activities such as meetings and workshops.

- New approaches towards community and stakeholder involvement occurred at different and varied scales of operation. At the one end of the spectrum there was large scale council-wide engagement while at the other end refined methods that included targeted literature for specific consultees, topic and time.

- Road shows and display stalls were good examples of involvement methods and prime examples of 'going to' communities and stakeholders and potentially a means of engaging hard-to-reach groups. Forums and representative groups allowed for good cross sections of views and workshops allowing communities and stakeholders to engage in the details of site specific areas and area based policy. Other new communication techniques included mobile texting and community information plasma screens.

o *Resource management*

Cases where local authorities had developed innovative methods of resource management which released funding for new approaches to stakeholder involvement were noted. Whilst building on current methods may not have produced the most innovative approach to consultation, Hounslow employed an e-government strategy that counter-balanced this. They were relying on easy access to their website and emailing consultees to reduce production costs of hard copy plans. Forest Health District Council planned their budget for consultation into the LDF preparation. The SCI stated that planning resources took into account the need to fund community and stakeholder involvement.

Planning the budget to fund stakeholder involvement was a prime example of good practice. In addition to budgeting for current methods of involvement, local planning authorities considered the value for money for new communication techniques such as mobile texting, plasma screens, hearing aid systems and interpreters. Because consultation fatigue was a constant concern of local planning authorities, Bristol City Council sought to reflect the on-going consultation undertaken within the City to avoid duplication

o *Joint working and partnerships*

Examples of joint consultation that doubled up involvement activities with local strategic partners have been found (Chelmsford, Northampton, Reading). Partnership working facilitated identification of hard-to-reach groups. Bristol City intended to establish links with the Equality Action Group to identify groups that had not traditionally been involved in the planning system through attending meetings and undertaking written consultations. The Council further proposed to use the Council for Voluntary Services for Bristol which represented over 600 community groups, voluntary organisations and social enterprise organisations to ensure that a comprehensive range of groups were involved in the LDF. West Berkshire Council implemented a scheme in which they pooled their resources with other council departments in an attempt to extend their LDF budget.

There was further evidence of joint working at Plymouth City Council who co-ordinated their LDF staff with other sectors. Northampton Borough Council and their local strategic partnership provided a good example of partnership working where one of the sustainable community strategies was concerned with 'engaging the community'. Bristol City Council engaged with the Bristol Partnership to establish Delivery and Action Groups.

Conclusion

The local authorities that were surveyed in this longitudinal study revealed some very good practices regarding stakeholder participation. Their stakeholder participation strategies have been made simple so that ordinary people could relate to them, understand and use them as a guide in the engagement with their elected representatives. Of even more importance was the ability of the strategy to come up with new and creative ways of

reaching the typically hard to reach groups so that consultation processes can be seen to be open, transparent and inclusive.

Resources always play an important part in any system of democratic government and various councils in the study adopted austerity measures to ensure economy and efficiency in their spending. New and better ways of doing things were explored such as use of texting and plasma screens in communicating with some of the hard to reach groups. In some instances, some councils pulled resources together in order to save for more pressing service delivery programmes. But even more importantly the councils were well aware that on their own they would not be able to reach all constituent communities and they opted to engage other community role players such NGOs, business organisations etc.

One of the challenges facing local government in South Africa in the development of integrated development plans is the issue of language, which is normally English, and most of the constituent communities are not familiar with the language given their previously disadvantaged backgrounds in education.

Language is not the only constraint for ordinary people but most of the documents prepared are very technical in nature and can only be understood by people with a certain level of education or specialised technical training such as engineering. Any meaningful participation would require that ordinary people be empowered through training and facilitation so that they can understand and engage in the decisions taken that affect delivery of services to their areas.

Resources are also a major factor at the local government level in South Africa with most municipalities not being viable and sustainable, which factor further constraints participation when considering various communication mechanisms and channels to be used to reach most of the communities including the normally hard-to-reach groups. Civic associations that were very strong during the struggle against apartheid appear to have disappeared from their usual civic engagement role. Civic associations would help greatly in partnering local authorities to reach some of the hard-to-reach members of the community. Enquiries about a public participation strategy at the Ekurhuleni Metro drew

a blank and almost all of the respondents interviewed knew nothing about the existence of a public participation strategy.

- **Facilitating and empowering stakeholders in planning processes**

  In the framework developed by Kironde (2000, 5) one of the key factors central to participatory decision-making was the facilitation and empowerment of stakeholders to make the processes more inclusive. This deals with issues of inequalities that are inherent in communities and ensures that all people are given an equal opportunity of being part of the decision-making process. Participatory budgeting was introduced in Porto Alegre order to effectively deal with the way that municipal revenues were distributed to fund service delivery projects. According to Abers (2000,80), participation was not only going to be about transferring service delivery responsibilities to civic organisations, but also "to increase citizen control over the state, improving the capacity of ordinary people to understand and decide about issues affecting their day to day lives, creating space for previously excluded groups to be part of the decision-making process and providing an environment in which people can gain skills, knowledge and organizing capabilities thereby promoting individual development.

  As people discuss their position on particular issues with others, they step out of their narrow understanding of their own self-interest into a perspective that takes collective needs and interest into account as well.

  In looking at participatory process in Porto Alegre, Abers (2000, 6) developed the following framework for identifying empowering participatory policies:

  o *Who should participate*

    In some instances participation was open to civic groups, labour movements, professional organisations etc. and in some instances it was an open process in which all residents were welcome to attend. Abers (2000, 6) is of the view that total participation is both impractical and does not always empower the intended beneficiaries. Rather, all policy arenas should be open to the control of those wanting to participate, as this will ensure that government decision-making is open to all people and that they have the opportunity to gain experience in public development.

Empowering participatory policy should be broadly open to those previously excluded from the public decision-making process.

o *Tasks of participants*

In a number of instances participation entailed implementation of already developed policy, while in others it entailed developing the policy as well. Abers' view of empowering participation was that participants should be involved in policy formulation as well so that they can own up and have better control in monitoring implementation. Participatory decision-making forums should involve the discussion of government policy goals and agendas, rather than merely the implementation of pre-designed programmes

o *Power of participants*

Citizens are seldom empowered with any amount of control over government decision-making. Abers (2000, 7) holds the view that partnership, delegated power and citizen control represents what should be contained in public policy if it is to be empowering to the normally excluded groups in government decision-making processes. Empowering participatory policy should involve effective citizen control.

Abers further identified the following as problems that normally confront participatory systems as and when policymakers create public forums that seek to give real decision-making power to those ordinarily excluded from government decision-making:

o Implementation problems

▪ Bureaucratic necessities of reaching goals rapidly and of measuring success in terms of time and money efficiencies, rarely fit in with the lengthy time periods needed to mobilize participants, Abers (2000, 8) observed. To avoid being engulfed in day-to-day issues of governing, the City government' new political strategy was to define projects and learn how to evaluate the broader political conditions that facilitated or inhibited implementation.

▪ Using strategic planning as a tool, the government identified obstacles and changed course where necessary without losing sight of the broader project. The City government listed a number of priorities that included neighbourhood infrastructure and the role of popular participation in the government's pursuit of its priorities. To this end the government and participants agreed on a set of rules

for prioritizing projects and distributing funds rather than coming up with a list of demands. At large assemblies that were held twice a year, the administration presented basic information to participants.

- The implementation of policy usually must be negotiated within the government structures where a number of groups have influence over government action. Examples included – where city planners designed participatory policies but implementing agencies refused to relinquish power to citizen forums; agency heads support participation but public employees resist. Abers observed that the money was now available for spending but people did not know how to spend it and it was now important for the City government to gain the necessary technical ability to effectively use resources generated through tax reform initiatives. Worse still, the City had received negative public opinion survey results and it was now imperative to combat the image of inefficiency and incompetence that prevailed among the public.

Decision-making and coordination of City activities were centralized in the Planning Office falling under the control of the mayor's office, thus enabling the City government to act with focus. The responsibility for the budget process, which was deemed to be "too deeply entrenched in bureaucratic habits and technocratic ideology", was moved to the Central Planning Office, and so was the coordination of priorities of each agency with the participatory program's regionally defined priorities.

- "Handing over real power to groups representing the poor raised opposition from powerful groups outside government"

Abers (2000, 65) did not only explain the role that the government could play in addressing the implementation problem but also addressed some of problems that Stiefel and Wolfe (1994) raised regarding the introduction of participatory initiatives by governent. The first of these problems was that "reformist actors have only minority power within the state". In the case of Porto Alegre the participatory initiatives were backed by the mayor and deputy mayor. Government

actions were channeled through the Central Plan thus enabling it to gain control of information and planning that geared it toward strategically defined projects of investing in infrastructure in marginal areas.

The centralization of decisions also enabled the mayor to transfer power over budget decisions to citizen forums because the mayor's office had control over the city agencies that actually carried out the budget expenditure. This challenged notions that all forms of centralization as 'authoritarian' and 'overly bureaucratic' and according to Abers "the process of decentralizing decisions to the citizenry was compatible with the centralization of decisions within the bureaucratic structure". The moral authority that the administration derived from the participatory process helped it to control what appeared to be a highly fragmented bureaucracy and in so doing increased transparency, accountability and administrative competence.

The second Stiefel and Wolfe problem was that participants and policy-makers often disagree on the goals of participatory decision-making. In the case of Porto Alegre the priorities of both groups matched because the administration had the flexibility to change in response to participants demands.

The third problem was about gaining support of public employees and the administration used the participatory process as a bargaining chip making it difficult for the union to pursue their demands when the administration demonstrated how this would diminish the scope of the budget policy. The fourth problem was about "precarious hold onto power by an incoming government", thus making it difficult to attend to the demands of its supporters. Although there were serious points of difference between the administration and party supporters, once financial resources became available the administration was able to re-establish its credibility through provision of basic services and investment in priorities defined through the budget process.

o   Inequality problems

Abers (2000, 115) observed that even in instances where government had created citizen forums for all to participate in decision-making processes, the socio-economically disadvantaged are less likely to participate because they do not have the money to travel to meetings, they have less free time to attend meetings, they lack the formal education to understand the complex policy and technical issues, women in particular are restrained by domestic responsibilities, people lack the self-confidence to voice the opinions in public places. All these disadvantages gave the better-off groups the opportunity to manipulate information to their advantage and even convince the less capable to adopt their way of seeing things. Abers goes on to say that even within socially uniform groups, individuals with more experience can outgun the less experienced, confirming what many authors say about participatory systems – that they reproduce elitism and inequalities.

Abers (2000,117) also observed that socio-economic inequality has often been cited as the most basic limitation to participation, as various studies have shown that in broadly different contexts and characters, middle class and the well educated normally outnumber the poor and less educated in neighbourhood association activities. These people lack the confidence to express themselves publicly because they lack the skills of public speaking and defending their opinions. Even within these marginalised groups, there are those with the relative experience in civic matters and are more likely to participate thereby gaining more experience to the disadvantage of others. This, according to some authors suggests that participatory democracy is unable to respond to elitism and thereby remain a serious problem to participatory systems of democracy.

o Co-optation problems

Abers (2000, 195) is of the view that most participatory programs do not necessarily provide for citizen control of government, but rather create a platform and opportunity for legitimizing and mobilizing popular support for ruling party policies as well as demobilizing potentially destabilizing civic leaders. According to Abers, this has the effect of also demobilizing combative civic organisations that are regarded as troublesome. Many scholars have challenged one of the premises of the participatory ideal that civic groups will have significant influence on how government's goals and

policies are defined, thereby transforming the state bottom-up. They argued that state sponsored participatory policies involve more top-down control of participants, thereby reducing the political efficacy of communities to the extent of co-opting rather than empowering them.

Abers (2000, 201) however counters these arguments by presenting the Porto Alegre's use of participatory forums whose agendas coincided with those of government in promoting a democratic, socially just image and in providing visible benefits for the poor. Abers however concedes that although there was agreement on the general focus of the budget policy, they did not always agree on the specifics such as how far participatory policy should go in controlling the details of government activity, which projects were appropriate and technically feasible etc.

Abers (2000, 211) concluded that as the Porto Alegre administration "convinced people that participation would bring rewards, mobilization in the pursuit of those rewards became the first step in a sequence of experiences through which participants developed political capabilities. Participatory inclusive associations gained space in neighbourhoods and bonds of cooperation developed among neighbourhood groups. Participants gained sophisticated skills in democratic practice and a growing collective sensibility. These political capacities, I would argue, gave the regional forums the organisational power to contest the positions of the very state that had originally promoted their creation".

Conclusion

One of the key points that a public participation strategy should be addressing is identifying the various role players, what role they should be playing and how they should be empowered to meaningfully engage in civic matters. While most participatory policies are said to be open to all, in effect they are not as very few people do participate. These policies need to be structured in a manner that encourages even the marginalised to have a sense of belonging i.e. to feel to be part of participating groups. Some participatory policies allow participation in policy formulation only, while excluding involvement in implementation or vice versa. Abers holds the view that for participation to be meaningful it should be in both policy formulation and implementation so that participants can own up and not abdicate their responsibilities.

Abers further raises three very critical issues to be considered in participatory processes for the processes to be considered meaningful and these are implementation, inequality and co-optation problems. Abers argues that when implementing projects, success should not necessarily be measured in time frames and financial efficiencies but that a set of rules should be developed and agreed upon to take care of some of the dynamics normally at play when dealing with development issues, which require more than time and money to reach fruition. Various interest groups in government need to be considered to avoid any conflicts that may arise between policy formulation and implementation. With regard to inequality problems Abers argues that socio-economic conditions of participants should be considered to ensure that the playing field is leveled.

This could be with regard to gender and culture issues that affect meaningful participation of women. Previous exposure to engaging in debates by the elites in relation to the less privileged, is also another factor to be considered. The cost of attending participatory sessions can also disadvantage people from poor backgrounds. On co-optation Abers cautions against those in power/government viewing civic associations as more of a threat and deciding to co-opt them rather face them in open debates.

As an evolving democracy South Africa is facing some of these challenges with regard to implementation of well-established legal frameworks that seek to empower the previously disadvantaged. Implementation remains a challenge with reports of rampant corruption abounding as evidenced by poor delivery of services and the accompanying endless and sometimes violent protests. Inequalities remain prevalent in most of South Africa's Black populated areas because of the apartheid legacy. While much is being done and in some instances a lot has been done, a lot remains to be done given the scale of the challenges regarding poverty and gender issues. High levels of unemployment and poverty and some cultural barriers for women continue to make meaningful participation a pipe dream for millions of South African. The apparent inactivity of the civic movements since the demise of apartheid, and the weak opposition parties in the country means that co-optation stakes have now been raised. Most of the civic movements have been co-opted by the ruling African National Congress (ANC) through its alliance with the South African National Civic Association (SANCO). On the labour front most of the trade unions are affiliated to the

Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) which is a strong alliance partner of the ruling party- the ANC.

4.4   Conclusion

From the literature that has been studied regarding strategic planning and management in the public sector, the following observations have been made:

- Political management is reported to be occupying a greater space and more time of public service managers because of the political themes that need to be reflected in the delivery of public services. The delivery of public services has also been significantly transformed to the extent of literally diminishing the concept of public and private sectors.

  This is because the delivery of public services is now being privatized, resources have now become very scarce, a culture of competitive performance has been introduced and so is the business style of management. All these have led to the transformation of the delivery of public services. Despite all the changes, public service management has remained distinctive because it concerns itself with political priorities and arranging for the collective choice of the many competing individual and groups service needs. The question remains whether public service managers are successful in pursuing the social policy goals of government.

- Public service organisations exist to pursue social policy goals of government with regard to welfare through distribution, human resource development through provision of health and education and the provision of the safety net for the vulnerable and the destitute. The public sector plays an intervening role in the provision of these services because of the failure of the market economy, given the fact that the production of public goods and services may result in externalities, production of certain goods in larger volumes (such as water) may result in decreasing units etc. This makes public services distinctive because of their unique purpose, conditions and task. A case in point is the provision of services at the local level which is subject to political scrutiny by councillors who oversee their provision as well as local users of the services and tax payers who have access to various forms of documentation regarding what services and how they should be provided. Another case of distinctiveness is illustrated by the issue of equity considerations in the provision given the competing claims for limited resources. This

distinctiveness of public services and goods brings into sharp focus the question of a public ethos in the delivery process. This public service ethos should be informed by the professional bodies that staff belong to, as well as the role played by politicians in creating an appropriate environment for the ethos to be practiced (Rose, 1999, 72)

- Accountability remains very critical in both the private and public sectors, although in the private sector measurement of performance is very straightforward in terms of goals to be met and assessed. However in the public sector measurement of performance can sometimes be very complex because of ill-defined goals set by politicians. The key issue to consider is that in the public sector accountability is democratic given the fact that funding of services is done through general taxation by the populace.

- All the issues that have been highlighted above require strong leadership with high degrees of skill and sensitivity to understand and manage processes and stakeholders towards a clearly defined direction. Leadership can be at the individual (mayor) or institutional level (the municipality/council) to develop a strategic direction, build the institutions of the local authority and develop a culture in terms of how things should be done, defining the mandates and properly analyzing stakeholders. To do all these requires an understanding of the political themes that must reflect in the delivery of services; the distinctiveness of public services, socio-economic context of change and the implications thereof as well as the various accountability mechanisms from political, managerial to legal and professional by the various stakeholders within the municipality.

- But even more importantly is the involvement of stakeholders in helping to shape the vision of the municipality by ensuring that the institutional arrangements and processes are inclusive, transparent, that there is accountability, equity and sustainability with all those involved being empowered for meaningful participation. This will require that there be a municipal-wide participation strategy clearly defining roles and responsibilities, processes and time frames as well as mechanisms of dealing with challenges that might arise from possible co-optation, inequalities and implementation problems.

The chapter that follows (Chapter 5) focuses on the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council, looking specifically at how strategic planning and management processes are undertaken. A brief profile of the Metro is provided so as to provide a context to the discussions that follow

on strategic planning and management including the leadership role of the municipality (councillors and management) and the involvement of the various constituent communities.

Chapter 5

5   THE CASE FOR EKURHULENI METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

5.1   The Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council

The Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council was selected to conduct research on stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management. Below is an abridged profile of the Metro that includes various localised administration that form the metro, the population, the geographical size, its vision and the resources allocated for delivery of services. For ease of reference the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council will herein be referred to as the EMM or simply the Metro.

According to the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council IDP, Budget & SDIP Summary Report (2006/07 – 2008/09, 1) "The Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council was established on the 5 December 2000, and encompasses the disestablished councils of Alberton (Thokoza), Benoni (Daveyton, Actonville, Watville, Etwatwa), Boksburg (Vosloorus, Reiger Park), Kempton Park (Tembisa), Germiston (Katlehong, Palm Ridge, Zokesizwe), Springs (Kwa-Thema, Bakerton), Nigel (Duduza), Brakpan (Geluksdal, Tsakane), Edenvale/Lethabong, Khayalami Metropolitan Council and the Eastern Gauteng Services Council. These towns previously existed in competition with each other.

Now a metropolis, Ekurhuleni houses some 2.5 million people in an area of 190 000 hectares of land. There are more than 41000 businesses, making it responsible for producing about 23% of the gross geographic product of Gauteng, Sub-Saharan Africa's most economically powerful region. Within its borders, Ekurhuleni is divided into three delivery regions – north, east and south – and has 88 wards. Eighty ward councillors and eighty seven proportionally representative councillors total the 175 councillors who look after the interests of the people of Ekurhuleni.

To assist in taking government closer to the people, 88 ward committees have been successfully established, which shows the EMM's commitment to community participation in successful democratic governance. Local government's main role is to ensure the continued provision of services to communities, provide democratic and accountable government as well as secure social, economic and political justice.

As the EMM's vision is 'The Smart, Creative and Developmental City', it places great emphasis and priority on operating in such a way as to benefit the entire community in all its endeavors. Placing the community first and thus maintaining a co-operative style of governance is of extreme importance to the EMM.

Community involvement is crucial in ensuring that the needs of the people are adequately met. Taking this further, ward committees have been established, showing that the Council values input from the community it serves. The regular meetings of these committees is where the community is offered the opportunity to interact with their ward councilor as well as air opinions, ask questions and make suggestions.

These interactions form the very basis of local government as – by means of Integrated Development Plan – it determines the allocation of resources to where the greatest needs exist". The Metro employs staff of 17000 and its budget for the past year was R11.3 billion made up of R10.2 billion current and R1.1 billion capital expenditures".

10 former standalone administrations have now merged into a single metro to cater for service delivery needs of about 2.5 million people. To make administration of delivery services easier, the Metro has been sub-divided into three regions. The Metro appears to be having a very strong industrial and commercial base of 41000 businesses, qualifying it to be described as economically powerful with an annual budget of R11.3 billion for the year under review. Although this provides a good revenue base to finance delivery of services across the Metro, reports of endless protests against poor service delivery prompts the need to question the effectiveness of systems of bottom-up planning regarding resource determination and allocation.

The 88 wards means that each ward has an average population of about 2500 with two elected representatives – one on a constituency basis and the other on a proportional representation basis – to provide leadership and make sure that the needs of the communities are met. The councillors are supported by ward committees, which factor is supposed to further enhance engagement with the communities, through holding of regular meetings including discussions and decisions that inform development priorities as contained in the integrated development plan.

One would assume that the councilor to resident ratio allows for meaningful engagement between the constituencies and their elected representatives. This takes us back to the research question – are the majority of the 2.5 million people resident in Ekurhuleni Metro, meaningfully involved in the formulation of the IDPs, to ensure that the R11.3 billion budget is equitably, openly and transparently determined and allocated to the 10 localities forming the Metro?

5.2   Strategic planning and management

5.2.1.   Contextual background

The notion of integrated development planning in South Africa was conceived during the early 1990's by various negotiating forums in response to the outdated and inappropriate way of local government planning that was introduced in the 1930's (DPLG & GTZ, 2005, 11). The African National Congress policy guidelines (1992) for a democratic South Africa envisioned municipal planning that should, inter alia:

- Ensure maximum involvement of all communities and stakeholders
- Be directed at those in greatest need
- Be focused on service delivery
- Be aimed at ensuring integrated and sustainable development

By 1995 the Reconstruction and Development Programme Office was promoting integrated development planning as a distinct approach to planning at the local government level. The intergovernmental Forum for Effective Planning and Development defined integrated development planning as "a participatory planning process aimed at integrating sectoral strategies in order to support the optimal allocation of resources between sectors and geographic areas and across the population in a manner that promotes sustainable growth, equity and the empowerment of the poor and the marginalised" (DPLG & GTZ, 2005, 12).

This type of local government planning was supported by international trends in other parts of the world, firstly with regard to decentralization of planning where the tendency was to decentralize government and planning in particular (DPLG & GTZ, 2005, 12).

Examples were India where a constitutional amendment in 1992 provided for a substantial devolution of urban planning to local authorities and Germany where all local authorities were required to prepare their own plans which should be consistent with other spheres of government.

The second trend was about democratization of planning with emphasis on the need for fair and equitable distribution of resources and services to the population as a whole. In 1992 leaders in 179 countries signed a global action plan for sustainable development called Agenda 21 based on the assumption that development issues can only be truly addressed by participation and cooperation of local authorities through participatory planning processes. Thirdly there was the issue of changing conceptions of government as an "enabler" of service delivery with municipalities being regarded as vehicle for local economic development through the establishment of partnerships with other stakeholders in the provision of services. Fourthly the pursuit of sustainability was seen to be promoting the importance of integrating environmental issues into social and economic development decision-making processes. Lastly there was an international search for integration based on the premise that improved integration will contribute to more effective and efficient use of scarce resources (DPLG & GTZ, 2005, 12).

Local government in South Africa was shaped and guided by, inter alia, the following pieces of legislation (DPLG, 2005, 13):

- The Constitution of the RSA 1996 where in Section 152 sets out the objectives of local government with public participation is an imperative with two objectives viz. to: provide democratic accountable local government and encourage communities and community organisations in matters of local government

- The White Paper on Local Government 1998 which defines developmental local government as "local government committed to working with citizens and groups with the community to find long term or sustainable ways to meet social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of the lives of the community. To realize this vision municipalities are encouraged to build local democracy by developing strategies and mechanisms to continuously engage with citizens, business and community groups".

- The Local Government Municipal Structures Act 1998 where Section 19 requires the municipality to strive within its capacity to achieve the objectives of Section 152 of the Constitution by (1) developing mechanisms to consult the community and community

organisations in performance of its functions and exercising its powers and (2) annually reviewing the needs of the community and municipal priorities and strategies for meeting those needs and involving the community in municipal processes

- The Local Government Municipal Systems Act 2000 which requires ,municipalities to develop mechanisms, processes and procedures for community participation, with Section 5(1) setting out the rights and duties of members of the local community, specifically outlining the rights of citizens to: (1) contribute to the decision-making process of the municipality and submit written or oral recommendations, representations and complaints to the municipality, political structure, office bearer or administration of the municipality (2) prompt responses to their written and oral communications including complaints to the council and (3) be informed of decisions of the municipal council or another political structure or office bearer of the municipality affecting their rights, property and reasonable expectations

- The Municipal Finance Management Act 2003 which requires that there be transparent and effective financial management in municipalities and municipal entities.

Conclusion

South Africa has developed a very strong legal framework to inform how local government should conduct itself in the provision of services to its constituent communities. The framework is also informed by international best practices from some of the world's well developed democracies. All the pieces of legislation require that there be effective systems of consultation in the decision-making processes between the municipalities and constituent communities so that the provision of services is well-informed in terms of the needs, resources allocation and prioritisation given the many and competing needs that should be catered for.

Consultative processes must also ensure that there is transparency, equity and fairness in the resource determination and allocation process given the uneven spread of economic resources across municipalities and historical backlogs in previously underserviced areas. What the study seeks to establish is whether the Metro is following or complying with the requirements of the legal framework in carrying out its mandate.

5.2.2. Integrated development planning

A number of authors have observed that in the past few decades the business community has found that in order to control its destiny in a changing political, economic and technological environment it needed to do a more formalized planning. This type of comprehensive planning developed by business is known as strategic planning. More recently municipalities have adopted some form of strategic planning as a vital tool for development and this type of strategic planning is called integrated development planning. In South Africa the Municipal Systems Act 2000 defined integrated development planning as "a process through which municipalities prepare a strategic development plan which extends over a five-year period. It is a broad plan for an area that gives an overall framework for development. It is a planning process and instrument which guides and informs planning, budgeting, management and decision-making process in a municipality".

The White Paper on Local Government also visualized a process where communities would be involved in governance matters including planning, implementation and performance monitoring and review This meant that through integrated development planning – involving all stakeholders – a municipality can: identify its primary objectives; formulate clear goals and action steps; develop the appropriate organisational focus, structures, systems to realize these objectives and goals; align resources and efforts with council and community priorities (DPLG & GTZ, 2005, 22).

In South Africa, prior to 1994, local government was mainly concerned with service provision and the implementation of regulations, but with the introduction of the Constitution and a new legislative and policy framework for local government, the role of local government changed significantly. Local authorities in South Africa are now required to be developmental in their approach and activities by formulating focused plans, based on developmental priorities.

The adoption of this approach was aimed at avoiding wasteful expenditure and perpetuating past spending patterns. Municipalities now have to ensure that scarce resources are spent effectively so that all citizens can have access to at least a minimum level of basic services. This they can do by taking a leading role in addressing poverty and inherited inequities created by the previous government as well as promoting local and social economic

development and democracy. Municipalities must not only deliver on present demands for services, but must also anticipate future demands and find ways to provide services in an effective, efficient and sustainable manner over the short, medium and long term. They could do this by working closely with provincial and national spheres of government in the delivery development programmes at the local level.

Conclusion

The introduction of integrated development planning in local government in South Africa was intended to significantly enhance planning and transform municipalities into service delivery organisations of the future with adequate fiscal and spending capacities enabling them to pursue the State's developmental agenda. Integrated development planning signaled the arrival of a new era for local government with a planning process intended to enable municipalities to assess the current situation, envision a future realistically by matching needs and resources and building consensus, while empowering constituent communities to be part of the planning process. The planning process would enable municipalities to deal with historical backlogs by reversing previous patterns of development. Communities would be actively involved in the planning and delivery of services thus enhancing chances of sustainable development in their areas. Development plans would only be accepted if all stakeholders took part in their development to inform service delivery priorities. Private and public sector investment would be pulled in to enhance social and economic development.

The IDP framework appears very easy and straightforward theoretically and if anything it appears to be a very good framework for a developing country like South Africa. However, local government is still at the very early stages of development in terms of skills and competencies to perform some of the functions including implementation of IDP projects.

Most of the municipalities have very weak revenue bases and have to depend on higher levels of government for continued support and survival. Communities require empowerment and facilitation to be able to meaningfully participate in planning processes and as many people need to be reached to make the planning processes inclusive.

5.2.1 Approach to integrated development planning (strategic planning and management)

The IDP process plan starts with extensive amount of preparatory work just before the planning gets under way and is intended to ensure proper management of the planning

process. According to DPLG (2005, 57) the IDP process plan must contain details of the institutional structures to be established for the management of the process; approach to public participation; structures to be established for public participation; time schedule for the planning process; roles and responsibilities and how the process will be monitored. Integrated development planning requires that all stakeholders in the municipality participate and it is the primary responsibility of the council and officials to ensure that this process is undertaken, owned and controlled by the municipality. Stakeholders include various community organisations with direct interest in the services and the functions of the municipality. Councillors, as elected representatives of the communities, can use the IDP process to communicate with constituent communities regarding important development issues and how they should be prioritized. The overall coordination of the IDP process is undertaken by senior officials including the municipal managers and departmental heads.

Civil society will have representatives of wards in the municipal area, representatives of ratepayers associations and other organisations that have a direct interest in the use of public services and facilities. Interest groups comprising non-profit organisations, disabled groups, business community including chambers of business and commerce as well as informal business and trading organisations are also expected to take part in the IDP process. Other organisations will include property developers and investors, local media and operators of public facilities such as bus and taxi operators should also be included.

The multiplicity of stakeholders ensures that every possible voice is heard and considered in planning for various competing service delivery needs, although realistically speaking the service delivery requirement list will be endless, far outstripping available resources. While not every need will be catered for, the consultative processes provides an opportunity for negotiation, trade-offs and compromises, prioritisation and reprioritization to ensure that the end product is the outcome of a participatory process. The process is undeniably long and complex and requires that roles and responsibilities of each of the stakeholders be clearly defined and that adequate timeframes be set to allow for forward and backwards movements of the process in reaching consensus on various development priorities and how they should be achieved.

The analysis phase entails the collection, processing and distribution of information becomes very important in ensuring proper coordination of consultative processes, the capturing and recording of input and the concretizing of proposals into viable and sustainable projects. The

analysis phase is followed by the strategies phase where community input is also sought in addressing service delivery needs that have been identified. It is at this phase that the empowerment of various stakeholders is crucial to ensure that there is meaningful participation by clarifying processes and simplifying technical jargon used in the initial development of some of the documents. The projects phase involves mainly technocrats with the requisite skills and knowledge for concretizing service needs into viable projects, with very little involvement by members of the community who are represented in the IPD steering committee. The integration phase also requires high levels of technical know-how in ensuring that the concretized projects are aligned to the municipal vision and that there is funding for that. The last phase that is the approval phase, is undertaken by the full council in a sitting to adopt the final IDP documents as the official municipal document.

5.3 Organisational leadership

Leadership has been said to be the focal point of organisational success, whether at the individual or institutional level. The ability to galvanize support, provide direction and lead change is not anybody's everyday job. It requires high levels of skill to not only make decisions but also make things to happen in a manner that creates sustainable value for an organisation.

According to DPLG & GTZ (2005, 45), "the new democracy in South Africa represents a synthesis between the system of representative democracy, where elected bodies like councils have to decide or to finally approve decisions and a corporatist negotiating type of democracy where decisions are arrived at through public discussion and processes of negotiation. For the integrated development planning process this understanding of democracy means that (1) the process is not just a planning process within the municipal government, but a forum for discussions and negotiations of various municipal stakeholders and (2) the final decision and accountability is with the municipal council as the elected body answerable to the public in the utilization of public services". This effectively defines the leadership role of the municipal council in the planning process to coordinate participatory activities through discussions and negotiation with various stakeholders to reach consensus on development priorities for the municipality and still take full accountability for the outcome of the planning process. As municipal leader the council has got to make things happen, within a democratic context.

The Local Government Structures Act 1998 places responsibility for the identification and prioritisation of community needs, converting the needs into objectives and goals and implementing the IDP on the shoulders of the Executive Mayor or Executive Committee, signifying the importance of leadership in strategic planning and management. The initiation of the IDP process is undertaken by a team under the leadership of the Municipal Manager who ensures that all councillors and senior management accept and commit to the process. This, the team does by clarifying and confirming the reasons for and purpose of the IDP process. Because the IDP will be an official document of the municipality a council resolution is sought to launch the process which entails submission by the municipal to the council to identify the needs for the IDP highlighting the elements of the process that includes the benefits of the process to the municipality and the communities at large; how the process will proceed and the people to be involved, responsibility for documenting the proceedings and the facilitators of the process and budget implications for the council.

The municipality through its councillors is required to use all appropriate means to create the necessary conditions conducive to public participation. While this is not always an easy and straightforward task to perform and will be limited in some instance and places, the councillors should ensure that major role players within the municipality participate.

Effective participation can only be brought about when councillors undertake active encouragement by focusing on social groups that are regarded as not well organised and lack the ability and power to articulate their points of view publicly.

Marginalised social groups include the poor, women, youth, disabled etc. and the municipality should identify them and look at appropriate ways of getting them representation in the IDP process. According to DPLG (2005) municipal planning cannot be based on direct participation through public meetings only, given the large numbers of residents in some of the communities, but that a structured participation with institutionalized participation channels such as the IDP forum should be established.

The role of leadership within the municipality also entails formulating the vision and a working ethos and has these communicated to the wider municipality so that there is clarity in terms of the direction to be taken and how things will be done. This will also ensure that there is mutual respect among and between the different role players, constructive debate, no hidden agendas and that everyone is committed to professional and helpful services within

the municipality. There is also a need for analysis of the status quo and situation analysis through compilation of comprehensive data focused on identifying priority issues and clarifying the causes and dynamic of these issues. These processes should inform each other while the dialogues with communities should be related to facts and figures, and priority issues resulting from participation processes should be the topics of in-depth analysis. The council should also see to the determination of development objectives as well as the operational strategies to pursue them.

According to DPLG (2005) the process of arriving at the objectives and strategies for each of the priority issues should allow for strategic multi-sectoral discussions taking into account policy guidelines and framework conditions. But even more importantly is the implementation plan that should be considered to ensure that it is practical and executable by clearly defining specific actions to be taken, assigning responsibility as well as determining time frames within which these must happen.

There will also be a need for evaluation to check for alignment, duplications and overlaps and where required amendments made to suit the municipality's specific service requirements. Contingency planning also needs to be undertaken, to provide for events that might crop up and derail the municipality's plans, and where required alternative strategies should be formulated.

DPLG & GTZ (2005, 35) goes on to say that "the establishment of an integrated system of planning and delivery requires the full involvement of those in charge of municipal management in the planning process. For integrated development planning process this implies that (1) the process has to be managed by somebody from within the municipal government, acting on behalf of the Municipal Manager, who has been assigned the powers to get all the relevant actors from within the municipal government on board and (2) there has to be a special multi-sectoral IDP Committee or task team which has to include all municipal heads of department and at least those councillors sitting in the Executive Committee as a basis for institutional transformation of the municipal administration".

The Municipal Manager and departmental heads play an important role in the IDP process because of their intimate knowledge of all aspects of the municipality including the environments in which it operates. The Municipal Manager together with the departmental heads, are required to do extensive preparatory work looking at both the internal and external

environments of the municipality and the different departments. The departmental heads also have to bring on board employees reporting to them by explaining to them the IDP process, the reasons for it and how it will be unfolding. Employees have the both the right and opportunity to ask questions and express their opinions so that there is understanding and commitment to the process. This is important because employee input will be required in the IDP formulation process because of their technical expertise in some of the functional areas. Once the whole IDP process is complete the council in a special sitting adopts the document as an official document of the municipality for implementation.

Critical review

The importance of the role of leadership in the planning process cannot be over-emphasized and the South African legislative framework clearly spells out this role for everyone in the council from the municipal council, the mayor, councillors, and municipal managers, including the various officials reporting to them. It is the leadership that must provide the strategic direction and mobilize resources to achieve the desired outcomes. One of the critical roles for the leadership is to provide information to communities about the planning processes, including feedback during implementation of the plan.

Needless to say, during interviews with respondents in the Ekurhuleni Metro, the availability of information was found to be problematic. The person conducting the study also had first-hand experience about the non-availability of records of minutes taken during consultative processes and registers with names of people attending the meetings. Some of the respondents felt betrayed by councillors who they had voted into office and once elected never came back to the constituencies to engage them and provide feedback. There were perceptions that most of the elected councillors were now focusing on their personal agendas of self-enrichment rather than representing the interests of communities. Most of the respondents found ward committees to be ineffective and also found role confusion between them and community development workers. Councillors as elected representatives of the people should be taking an effort to go to their constituencies and coming up with other creative ways of communicating.

The issue of poor leadership in the Metro meant that there was no accountability by elected representatives. Out of the 175 councillors in Ekurhuleni about half of them were proportionally representative councillors, who were accountable to the party that put them in office rather than the communities. Endless protests about service delivery meant that the

elected representatives were also not holding the officials to account in carrying out the mandate of council. The lack of suitably qualified personnel also meant that the management of resources in the implementation of service delivery programmes was a very serious challenge.

It also came to light during the course of the study that the Metro did not have a public participation strategy, which would have guided the engagement processes between the elected representatives and the communities by defining roles, identifying suitable ways of engaging with communities especially the hard to reach groups. Such as strategy, would have made the planning processes more open, transparent and inclusive.

With the type of leadership challenges as highlighted above including lack of accountability, it remains questionable as to whether the planning processes can be said to be inclusive, transparent and open, amongst others. It also remains questionable as to whether the leadership is able to set effective systems of bottom planning to ensure there is democratic accountability. Strong leadership is required to make the IDP work with the "integrated" component of the IDP requiring a very critical balancing act where issues of equity become important in the allocation of resources amongst and between the previously well-resourced and under-resourced areas. The "development" component is also important in ensuring that there is growth and improvement in the quality of life of constituent communities and the "planning" component ensures that there is a balance between current and future service delivery requirements from a resource allocation point of view to ensure sustainability. The current continued dependency of municipalities on provincial and central government financial support leaves much doubt as to whether the less developed areas will ever be brought into the service delivery network, let alone growing the existing areas and ensuring sustainability going forward.

5.4   Stakeholder involvement in the planning process

Public participation is not equally relevant and appropriate in each stage of planning because not all participation procedures are equally suitable for each planning step (DPLG, 2005). To optimize the impact of participation, the mechanisms of participation will differ from stage to stage with municipalities deciding on appropriate tools for the right step. Public participation might be limited to analysis, strategies, project planning, integration, approval and monitoring of implementation stages.

In developing municipal IDP, public participation should serve to fulfill four major functions as follows: needs orientation to ensure that people's needs and problems are taken into account; appropriate solutions that arise from using the knowledge and experience of local communities; community ownership by mobilising initiatives and resources of local residents and communities and encouraging cooperation and partnerships between municipal government and residents for implementation and maintenance; empowerment by making integrated planning a public event and a forum for negotiating conflicting interests, finding compromises and common ground, thereby creating the basis for transparency and accountability of local government towards communities (DPLG, 2005). One of the most transformational innovations brought about by the adoption of the IDP approach – as a planning process is that when the municipality develops a service delivery solution, it needs to learn directly from user experience through constant interaction with the communities. In business language this would be called "custom-making or tailor-making" the solution for the customer.

When a municipality seeks to undertake development to serve local needs there is bound to be cultural and other obstacles that might just stand in the way of the project, because local communities maybe viewing some of the procedures as very bureaucratic while government employees see communities as reluctant partners. But even more importantly is that some of the infrastructure and facilities need to be protected and safeguarded and unless communities see these as theirs, they are unlikely to pay attention whenever the facilities are vandalized or destroyed.

Different areas in the same municipality might not be equally developed and this will require that there be negotiations and compromises to accommodate each other's needs given the limited available resources. When the resource determination and allocation processes are done in an open and transparent manner, any misgivings about the planning process are dispelled. Interface between the municipality and the communities need to be facilitated in order to ensure that proper consultation takes place and consensus is reached. It is not always going to be practically possible to achieve interaction through public mass meetings, hence the need for a structured form of participation.

The Municipal Systems Act 2000 made provision for the following institutional arrangements to be made to obviate challenges that would normally arise when public participation is undertaken only through mass meetings:

- Ward Committees are the organisational framework through which communities in geographical areas can participate in the planning process

- Stakeholder organisations which represent certain social, economic, gender and environmental interests have to be registered as 'stakeholders association' through which they can participate in the planning process

- The council and chairperson of the IDP Committee have to make sure that all relevant groups and social strata are given the opportunity to be adequately represented. Unorganised groups should be represented by 'advocates'

- All ward Committees and Stakeholder Associations should be represented on the 'Representative IDP Forum' that will form a formal link between the municipal government and the public.

- IDP committees and their technical, project/programme-related sub-committee or task teams may include representatives from ward committees and stakeholder associations or resource persons from civil society if the municipality considers it appropriate

The above institutional arrangements are what the Good Governance Learning Network South Africa call 'provided spaces' because they are regulated and institutionalised through a set of policies and laws, and invite citizens to participate in a range of government created and regulated structures, hence the type of participation being called "structured participation".

These 'provided spaces' are different from 'popular spaces' which refers to arenas in which people congregate on their own initiative, whether in solidarity to protest against government or to engage government. These groups are mostly regarded as referred to as "transient expressions of public dissatisfaction or dissent" (DPLG & GTZ, 2005, 45).

The primary function of ward committees is to be a formal channel of communication between the community and the municipal council about general municipal issues, development and service options. Ward committees consist of 10 or less elected people who represent a diversity of interests in the ward and should be equitably representative, where diversity is understood to mean a variety of representation such as rate payers bodies,

development organisations, labour unions, business associations, women, youth, faith-based and other cultural organisations. A ward committee is chaired by the local ward councilor. A 2004/5 National ward Committee Survey highlighted effective communication and interaction between the ward committee and municipal council as one of the main challenges of the ward committee system.

Information dissemination, circulating relevant information to and between all stakeholders is a key function of ward committees and one they were reported to be performing not very well according to public perception with the following raised as challenges faced: (1) ward committees have to ensure that adequate, relevant and reliable information is obtained from council and council own communication strategies were reported to be not very reliable; (2)ensure this information is effectively communicated to the community is a way that allows effective engagement and meaningful responses (DPLG, 2005, 37)

The Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations, 2001 requires that where there are no other municipal-wide structures for community participation, the municipality must establish a forum. The forum must be representative and enhance community participation in the integrated development plan. The forum must also enhance public participation in monitoring, measuring and reviewing municipal performance. The functions of the forum include consultative and monitoring of the IDP, its implementation and review; discuss the performance management system, its implementation and review and monitor municipal performance according to the key performance indicators and targets set by the municipality. This has led to the establishment of IDP Representative Forum, for general public participation with ward committees being part of this forum.

Community Development Workers are multi-skilled public servants deployed at community level to bridge the gap between the provision of services by the government and access to those services by communities. They are deployed at municipalities where they live to address service delivery issues that include lack of information, knowledge and poor communication that communities experience in relation to services.

Community Development Workers link communities with all government spheres and departments focusing on: (1) helping communities with developing and articulating their needs (2) facilitating the development of community structures (3) facilitating public participation in government development projects such as the IDP (4) identification of service blockages in the community and (5) finding solutions to identified needs and blockages by

interacting with the three spheres of government. In a 2004/5 National Ward Committee Survey (DPLG, 2005, 32), only 32% of respondents are reported to have said that there was a link between community development workers and ward committees. The DPLG further commented that in terms of the new strategy that was developed for the community development workers, there was some potential for overlapping of functions

Critical review

The legislative framework that has been developed for stakeholder participation in local government decision-making processes can be regarded as very comprehensive, as it provides for total participation by all. The framework is further supported by international best practice regarding participatory policies in systems of democratic government. The framework allows for establishment of various institutional arrangements with clearly defined roles. The Municipal Systems Act 2000 in particular provides for the following institutional arrangements: ward committees, forum of stakeholder organisations, IDP committee, IDP representative forum etc. Over and above these arrangements there are community development workers to further assist in the needs identification and liaising with the relevant service delivery agencies of government. All these are government initiatives aimed at enhancing participatory democracy and ensuring that there is community participation, accountability and bottom-up planning, yet there is very little evidence of that in the real life situation in the Metro.

- Community participation

    For community participation to be meaningful i.e. inclusive, open and transparent, the Metro should have a public participation strategy which identifies the various role players, spell out their roles, channels and medium of communication, the processes to be undertaken or followed when undertaking strategic planning, expectations etc. Enquiries from the Metro and interviews with respondents revealed that such a strategy does not appear to be in place. Abers (2000) identified three problems that participatory policies encounter viz.: implementation problems where success of projects undertaken is often measured in time frames and financial outputs rather agreed set of rules that will take into account typical development dynamics that are sometimes averse to measurement in time lines and financial terms in order to gauge success. A public participation strategy would have provided guidelines regarding how achievements would be measured or failures corrected where applicable. The endless service delivery protests could be the result of a

typical implementation problem with communities being over-expectant about what is possible, especially in the absence of communication from elected representatives.

The second problem according to Abers is the inequality problem arising from socio-economic conditions in the various communities either because of poverty issues that makes it difficult for people to afford costs of attending meetings or because of gender issues arising from cultural barriers that makes it difficult for women to attend meetings because of other family commitments. Again a public participation strategy would have articulated how such matters would be dealt with, such as subsidizing attendees to meetings or holding meetings closer to the people and at times that are convenient to all to accommodate those with family commitments. The third problem is the co-optation problem and could arise because of inequalities where the elite who can afford meeting costs and are articulate in presenting arguments on issues because of 'learning effects' always dominating proceedings to the exclusion of the socio-economically disadvantaged. There is no evidence of Metro taking any effort to address, inter alia, implementation, inequality and co-optation problems to empower communities and facilitate their participation in the planning processes.

- Accountability

  Any system of representative democracy has various accountability mechanisms put into place that includes elected representatives being accountable to the electorate. Elected representative are also accountable to the council through the doctrine of "ministerial and cabinet" responsibility for the operation of departments. Parties, when campaigning for elections make promises to the public by providing them with information as contained in their manifestos. These manifestos enable the public to judge party representatives' performance once elected. Law (1999) is of the view that the effectiveness of this mechanism of accountability at the local level is questionable, mainly because of lack of party competition. In South Africa, Law's contention holds true because of the ANC's dominance of the political scene and effectively controlling almost all the councils. Most of the respondents to the study questionnaire did confirm that most ANC councillors do not for a moment think that they are accountable to the electorate. Rather they think they are accountable to the party because the party, through a system of proportional representation, has put some councillors into those positions. There is also managerial accountability with managers being accountable to politicians for delivery of services

based on set objectives. In South Africa service delivery at the local government level is generally very poor in a number of instances, with flashes of brilliances being few and far in between. This can be attributed in part to poor implementation of the performance management system where there is one in place, and partly due to the ruling party's policy of "cadre deployment" which has been subject of much criticism in recent times. Low levels of community participation would simply mean that there are weak accountability mechanisms in place (Schou, 2000).

- Bottom-up planning

The local government legislative framework has made adequate provision for the establishment of the system of bottom-up planning, in particular the integrated development planning approach. Ward committees, stakeholder associations and IDP representative forum are some of the institutional arrangements provided for to ensure effective systems of bottom-up planning. These systems of bottom-up planning allow for consensus building among stakeholders with different needs and priorities by negotiating and compromising around their established viewpoints.

For these to happen, requires that there be proper facilitation by the municipality to empower the communities to acquire basic management and technical skills so that they can understand the planning process and be able to deal with other stakeholders. Productive participation will be fostered when stakeholders jointly identify needs and resources and how to share them. Communities also have to be empowered with the necessary knowledge and information about the issues requiring to be addressed so that they can engage constructively thereby coming up with practical and achievable solutions to service delivery challenges. Meaningful participation requires that resources be allocated for facilitation and empowerment. During interviews with respondents it came to light that there was very little if any, in the form of facilitation and empowerment by the Metro because of lack of resources. Availability of information on Metro activities was also reported to be a challenge. Lack of empowerment and facilitation exacerbates the inequality problem that would result in co-optation of the socio-economically disadvantaged by the elite in key service delivery decisions. Once co-opted the less privileged use time lines as a measure of gauging effectiveness of delivery of services to their areas and when these take long to come, they become impatient and embark on protests which start reflecting poorly on systems of bottom-up planning.

5.5   Conclusion

Prior to 1994 (first democratic elections) there was a dual approach (the one that served whites and the other that served blacks) to local government characterised by racial division of urban South Africa and the development of the homeland policy. As discussions started towards a negotiated settlement among the various parties the notion of integrated development planning in South Africa was conceived for local government. By 1995 the Reconstruction and Development Programme (policy of the African National Congress) Office was reported to be promoting integrated development planning as a distinct approach to planning at the local government level. This type of local government planning was supported by international trends in other parts of the world firstly with regard to decentralisation of planning where the tendency was to decentralize government and planning in particular.

The Constitution of the country sets out the objectives of local government with public participation is an imperative; the White Paper on Local Government defined developmental local government as "local government committed to working with citizens and groups with the community to find long term or sustainable ways to meet social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of the lives of the community". The Municipal Structures Act requires the municipality to strive within its capacity to developing mechanisms to consult the community and community organisations in performance of its functions and exercising its powers and the Municipal Systems Act requires municipalities to develop mechanisms, processes and procedures for community participation.

To give effect to the Constitution and accompanying legislation, a planning approach – integrated development planning - was adopted aimed at avoiding wasteful expenditure and perpetuating past spending patterns, and ensuring that scarce resources are spent effectively so that all citizens can have access to at least a minimum level of basic services. Municipalities could do this by taking a leading role in addressing poverty and inherited inequities created by the previous government as well as promoting local and social economic development and democracy. Municipalities would not only deliver on present demands for services, but would also anticipate future demands and find ways to provide services in an effective, efficient and sustainable manner over the short, medium and long term.

In spite of a very good legislative framework that provides for participatory governance, challenges abound in the implementation of the framework. Leadership at the councillor level to make things happen by engaging with their constituencies and providing feedback appears to be lacking. Lack of political accountability appears to be at the heart of councillor failure to fulfill promises in accordance with their parties' election manifestos. Dominance by the ruling party of the political landscape and a very weak opposition is not helping the situation either. This is exacerbated by failure of politicians to hold officials accountable in carrying out the mandate of the council, as reflected in poor delivery of services in various parts of the Metro. Community participation appears to be constrained by various challenges that include implementation, inequality and co-optation including a very weak civic movement to inspire communities to agitate for improved delivery of services.

The ward committees have also been reported as being very ineffective, and so are the community development workers whose role was intended to help communities with developing and articulating their needs and public participation in government development projects such as the IDP. It has become evident that with these type and magnitude of challenges facing the Metro, meaningful participation in strategic planning and management processes is not entirely feasible

The next chapter (Chapter 6) documents the results of the study.

Chapter 6:

6 RESULTS OF THE STUDY

6.1 Introduction

Local government in South Africa has had its own challenges since its inception after the advent of constitutional democracy in 1994. During the early days of transition from an apartheid state to a constitutional state, focus appears to have been directed at the first two tiers of government, in terms of deployment of skills and allocation of resources. This was in spite of the fact the local government was the closest to the people and needed proper and adequate resourcing to respond to service delivery needs. One of the major problems that faced local government and was identified early on was that there were too many of these local authorities and resources were thinly spread. A process of re-demarcation led to the reduction in the number of municipalities from 843 to 284. Despite this intervention inadequate financial resources and lack of skills in areas of engineering and financial management services continued to pose serious challenges for local government. Protest after protest at poor levels of service delivery characterised the everyday life of most of the municipalities including the metropolitan municipalities that were presumed to have been better resourced. It appeared that the challenges facing municipalities were more than just lack of skills and financial resources because at some point in time, municipal infrastructure grants allocated and given to municipalities to deal with infrastructure service backlogs remained unspent and had to be surrendered to National Treasury.

The objective of this study was to look at ways in which some of the problems facing municipalities could be addressed. Specifically the issue of strategic planning and management was identified as being crucial to local government sustainability. The manner in which protests over poor service delivery were conducted which included the destruction of property and sometimes resulted in the loss of life was becoming difficult to comprehend. There was an understanding that communities in municipalities formed an important stakeholder and were therefore part of the decision-making processes including service needs identification, resource determination and prioritisation given the many and competing service delivery needs. However resources were also not endless and historical backlogs compounded the situation even further.

The study was even more important given the fact that South Africa's constitution and accompanying local government legislation provided for communities and other stakeholders to be part of the decision-making processes on matters that affected their day-to-day lives. South Africa was now part of the civilized world and similar countries around the world with systems of democratic government, allowed for citizen participation in various aspects of government activity.

Local government as the government very closest to the people had to reflect the democratic values of, inter alia, accountability, transparency, equitability and consultative and inclusive processes in decision-making. Below are the findings of the study carried out to establish if there was meaningful participation by communities, in the strategic planning and management processes of the Ekurhuleni Metro.

6.2.   Findings

The integrated development planning (IDP) framework provided by the National Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG, 2005), has five phases viz. the analysis phase, strategies phase, projects phase, integration phase and approval phase. Of the five phases, stakeholders are meaningfully involved in the analysis, strategies and approval phases. One could assume that the projects and integration phases are very technical and complex and would require skilled and hands-on involvement and approach respectively. Proposals that are put together in the projects phase by technical experts are supposed to be done so "with input from the affected communities so that adjustments can be made to project designs to take account of local preferences and conditions". There are no clearly spelled out processes and procedures as to when and how the input from affected communities is obtained, lending further credence to the assertion that stakeholders are not at all involved in this phase of the IDP process. The IDP Representative Forum's involvement comes in when discussing and approving the composition of the team of experts that puts the proposals together. The question then becomes – how are local preferences taken into account for incorporation into the proposals? The integration phase appears even more complex and no mention is made of community input as this is taken care of through the IDP Representative Forum that engages in inter-sectoral negotiations for scarce resources and prioritisation. The focus of the study has thus been on the three phases of analysis, strategies and approval.

The results of the study is documented in two parts, where the first part seeks to establish the actual processes to identify stakeholders, ensuring the various groupings are suitable for engagement at the various stages of the IDP process and are representative, communication with stakeholders, manner of stakeholder engagement, capturing of the issues during engagement and the roles of the different stakeholders in the strategic planning and management process (engagement processes).

The second part seeks to establish whether the processes being engage in are in fact meaningful in terms of inclusivity, consultation to reach consensus, transparency, facilitation to enable stakeholder participation, empowerment, equitability, visioning in terms of collective conceptualization of needs, priorities and opportunities (quality of engagement).

6.2.1   Engagement processes

- **Identification and encouragement of stakeholders to participate**

The IDP framework identifies the various stakeholders and their role/interest in the formulation of the local authority's integrated development plan. However the profile as defined by the IDP framework is certainly very generic and would differ from the local stakeholder profile in that the local profile would be more specific such as defining communities further into components that include NGOs and CBOs, the unemployed, the indigent, the disabled etc. The stakeholder identification process would be part of the community participation strategy of the Metro which would clearly spell out mechanisms to be used in identifying and analyzing stakeholders as well encouraging them to attend or be involved in various participatory processes of service needs determination and provision. There was no evidence of stakeholders being classified further other than as either business or community members and yet the IDP framework makes provision for identification and encouragement of organised and unorganised groups by members of the IDP Representative Forum to participate in IDP processes.

- **Suitability and representivity of the various stakeholder groups**

For meaningful participation in the strategic planning processes of the municipality, various stages of the IDP process require stakeholders that are representative and the use of different manners of engagement. Not all stakeholders will respond to a call by means of distribution of leaflets to attend meetings and others might not be best suited to one-on-one engagements.

Also, given the fact that some of the phases of the IDP process such as the projects and integration phases require people with technical know-how and understanding for meaningful participation to take place, it is not helpful to have the same stakeholders attending all the meetings.

However representivity to ensure all viewpoints are taken into account is important. Not everybody in the community or particular ward has the technical expertise or basic understanding for that matter of some of the complex processes that entail putting together the project proposals and integrating the various inputs from various sources and building up a business case for approval and eventual funding and implementation.

The IDP framework, without spelling out the criteria for identification and selection of various stakeholders, proposes the formation of an IDP Representative Forum that should include community representatives. The assumption is that the community representatives selected will be suitably qualified persons for whom the local authority shall have defined the selection criteria. The criteria for selecting such community representatives would normally be included in the participation strategy that would also spell out the need for representivity taking into account gender, racial and disability and other demographics. From the observation made, invitations to communities did not appear to have given consideration to the issue of representivity. A participation strategy, which is absent at Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council, would have spelled out how representivity and suitability of stakeholders should be achieved in the IDP engagement process. Representatives of the various community organisations complained about councillors who were appointed to represent them but were not nominated by residents because they did not live in their areas. This reflected poorly on the system of proportional representation.

6.2.1. Communication with stakeholders

The one manner of communication that most municipalities are accustomed to which was observed during the study was the calling of community meetings. While conceding that this is one of the effective manners of communication as it gives stakeholders the opportunities to engage their representatives on matters of concern, according to respondents to the questionnaire that was administered, such meetings have been found to be far and few in between, irregular and attendance not satisfactory. It also came to light that these meetings are normally called over weekends only, when people have other commitments to attend to given

the sometimes short notices given. Still, not everybody comes to hear of the meeting given the limited mechanisms used for calling such meetings (distribution of leaflets, notices at major centers, word of mouth etc.).

While it is easy to take a blanket approach and send all stakeholders the same information, this could be more effective if the information requirements of each stakeholder group are identified and addressed accordingly. The absence of a public participation strategy makes it difficult for the municipality to explore various effective ways of communicating with stakeholders including the targeting of groups that are regarded as unorganised and hard-to-reach.

People's perception of communication by the municipality is that councillors only talk to them when looking for votes during election time and once the elections have gone past, councillors are no-where to be seen. Some of the respondents were of the opinion that councillors were inaccessible, they talk on behalf of residents instead of talking to the residents first, with some residents threatening not to vote in future local government elections. Poor communication with the stakeholders was certainly failing the meaningful public participation process in the formulation of municipal integrated development plans.

- **Manner of stakeholder engagement**

Allied to communication with stakeholders is the manner of engagement. In the same way that various communication channels should be explored targeting different types of stakeholders, the same can be said about manner of engagement. The 'one size fits all' way of always calling community meetings does not always achieve the required results. Again it was observed that the absence of a participation strategy at the Metro, for identifying various stakeholders in terms of their requirements and appropriateness of manners of engagement, was not helping stakeholder engagement in strategic planning and management processes. During the IDP processes other people are away on holiday, others are lying sick in home or hospital, there is also the homeless, others work very odd hours such as night shifts, while others are at school etc. (referred to as unorganised groups). The municipality needs to do a stakeholder analysis and identify and separate the various stakeholders and develop suitable engagement mechanisms that will ensure their participation in the IDP process. This will

assist in ensuring that when processes fail, the cause is not seen as a result of adopting inappropriate engagement mechanisms

- **Capturing of issues during engagement**

As part of the observation a request was forwarded to the municipality for copies of minutes taken during stakeholder participation sessions. These would have included minutes of meetings of Ward Committees, IDP Representative Forum, IDP Steering Committees etc. The response received was that these minutes were not available, which could have meant that they were either not taken or could not be made available to the observation team. If the latter was true, this was unacceptable because these minutes were supposed to be public documents available for inspection by residents, as and when required. If the former was true it highlighted a very serious weakness in the record management system of the municipality. The question then arises – how are issues raised during these meetings considered for incorporation into the planning document and subsequent implementation. The failure to record or make available records of proceedings of meetings further confirmed perceptions by some respondents that some of the meetings called by councillors are meant to legitimize decisions already taken.

If the Ekurhuleni Metro had a public participation strategy, the strategy would indicate mechanisms for capturing issues raised at meetings, how these issues should be dealt with, including the allocation of resources for proper record taking, processing, storage and dissemination.

- **Roles of different stakeholders**

Given the multiplicity of stakeholders that includes business sector, non-government organisations, customers, consumers, residents, unorganised groups etc. there is bound to be a limitless demand on the services of the Ekurhuleni Metro thereby creating extreme pressure on municipal resources. All these stakeholders have a moral legitimacy to their claim on municipal resources and have varying degrees of power depending on their position in the power grid to influence resource determination and allocation decisions.

This sometimes put the Metro in very difficult positions when having to choose between legitimate needs of one stakeholder group over those of another which are equally legitimate, urgent and powerful. For this reason a need arises to incorporate as many stakeholders as

possible into the planning processes in an attempt to build consensus from a broad cross-section of stakeholders. The issue of definition of roles and responsibilities then becomes very crucial to avoid duplication and overlaps in the use of resources, while ensuring everyone is accommodated and takes part in the planning process. A public participation strategy by the municipality would clearly identify each stakeholder group and define its role in the planning process. Such a public participation strategy is not in place at the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council although the IDP Framework generically defines each stakeholder's role at a very high level, leaving the definition of local specifics to the Metro. Linked to the role of stakeholders is the question of capacity in the Metro as one of the key challenges facing local authorities. Some respondents were of the view that councillors do not enjoy the trust of residents because they lack the passion in the work they do and are only there to serve their own interests.

Other respondents to the questionnaire expressed the view that councillors had no leadership skills or the desire to work with communities, as they are never available to listen to residents' concerns but instead make endless promises that they are never able to fulfill. The lack of local government capacity was confirmed by newspaper reports that the assessment of local government capacity to deliver revealed that issues of skills, vacancies, delegation of responsibilities and relationships between various levels of government required attention.

6.2.2. Quality of engagement

- **Inclusiveness – identification of stakeholders at various levels for involvement in the strategic planning and management process**

Inclusivity means all stakeholders of the particular locality should be included in all if not some of the major strategic visioning processes. For all the stakeholders to be included, the Ekurhuleni Metro should be having ways of identifying them and ways in which they can be engaged for meaningful participation in the various visioning processes. Including all stakeholders has positive implications for legitimacy of decisions taken because of the buy-in arising from participatory processes. It came to light during the cause of the observation, that blanket and or 'one size fits all' approaches are adopted in communicating with stakeholders as well as the manner of engaging with them. Stakeholders are communicated with through news media, notices at public places such as community halls and municipality facilities. Engagement is mainly carried out by means of holding meetings with communities that are

also far and few in between and attendance has not been very good. This brought into question the inclusivity of the process in stakeholder visioning.

Given the large stakeholder base of the municipality, consisting of the business sector, residents, consumers, non-government organisations, community based organisations, other surrounding, municipalities bordering, provincial and national tiers of government, inclusivity is very critical in ensuring buy-in by all in the municipal visioning processes to ensure sustainability, legitimacy and equitable resource allocation.

The absence of inclusivity in the planning processes was supported by respondents who cited endless protests as evidence of exclusion. Respondents further stated that in some instances people become uninterested in participating in municipal activities because they do not know what is in it for them.

Others think it is the exclusive preserve of a privileged few, while others do not even know that they have a right to be part of the municipality's decision making processes.

- **Consultation to reach consensus – consultation through public debate and presentation of various issues to dispel misgivings "ready-made decisions to the communities for endorsement"**

One of the cornerstones of participatory processes is consultation in order to obtain buy-in and consensus to legitimize decisions that are taken. During the study it came to light that there was very little in the form of consultation by the municipality to various stakeholders in the greater Ekurhuleni Municipality. Sporadic meetings were held more for information purposes only rather than meaningfully engaging communities in public debates on challenges that faced the municipally. Respondents reported that the only time councillors were seen talking to communities was only when they were seeking their votes for re-election into office. The Ekurhuleni Metro did not have a public participation strategy to guide it in the consultation processes with various stakeholders. The public participation strategy would have detailed various ways of carrying out consultations, be it through the holding of meetings, distribution of information through the media, in certain instances one on one session or groups of people, publishing of documents on the Council website for residents to comment, a dedicated hot line for dealing with specific service delivery matters etc.

But even more importantly, before the Metro could determine a suitable manner of consultation it would have to identify the various stakeholder groupings and depending on the circumstances of each grouping, be it students, the elderly, vagrants and other hard to reach groups, find an appropriate consultation mechanism. The determination of the suitability of the consultation mechanism would also depend on the issue to be discussed, because certain issues lend themselves to group discussions, one on one session, radio and or television or newspaper debates. The Metro also needed to be innovative in its consultation processes to get stakeholders interested in debating municipality issues. Innovative consultation processes would be very helpful in dealing with consultation fatigue amongst others.

Respondents reported instances where people have been called to meetings or asked to provide input, but have never seen the benefits of their involvement, because nobody ever go back to them and explain how their involvement has influenced the course of events, however insignificantly. Stakeholders sometimes become interested in attending meetings or engaging in debates to the extent that they know there is something in it for them.

- **Transparency – free flow of information from the authorities to the people for effective involvement and the information to be given to communities in advance to enable stakeholders to make informed decisions**

Transparency is central to good governance. Good governance practices are about being open and making information freely available to all those that are entitled to have it. A lot of organisations that are for profit and not for profit make certain types of information freely available to their stakeholders so that they can know about the organisation in terms of what it does, how it's done it and with whom. This is the one way in which an organisation can promote its objectives and activities and gain support from the wider community. Public institutions in particular are required by law to make certain information freely available for public consumption. It came to light during the observation that information about certain public meetings was not available for inspection by the observation study team. This included minutes of public participation meetings and record of planning issues discussed at those meetings. The one set of information that was found to be freely available was the IDP and related documents.

From observations made it also came to light that when municipal officials and elected representatives go to address communities on IDP processes or service delivery issues, they took with them pre-packaged presentations. Respondents said that there was no evidence of information on the particular topic being distributed in advance of the meeting for participants to consider in advance so that they can ask questions or debate issues. Respondents further said that the meetings were rather more of information sessions than open debates to obtain different perspectives on the issues in question. Some of the respondents complained about typical councillor top-down approaches, that left very little or no room for engagement.

Although part of the challenge that faced the Metro might to have been the lack of resources to provide such information, it does not appear to have been the culture of the Metro to provide participants with information in advance. Where such information was provided in printed media such as newspapers or where documents were lying for inspection at the municipality, challenges of access came to the fore as some people could not afford to buy the newspaper let alone read it. Some residents stayed very far from municipal offices making access an even bigger challenge. The question of the technical jargon contained in the some of the documents was also an issue, and so was the question of the language in which the documents were written (mostly in English). Here again the question of innovation came to the fore with the Metro needing to find ways of improving access by making documents freely available and holding information sessions to simplify some of the technical jargon and interpreting into locally spoken languages.

- **Facilitation – to enable local stakeholders to take a leading role in doing things themselves by evaluating own circumstances and resources and coming up with agreeable and workable solutions**

Participation in the municipality's vision processes means that communities get involved in determining the future direction of service delivery activities starting with the needs analysis, then the resource determination and allocation before ensuring that services are delivered. It came to light during the observation that to a large degree, municipal officials and elected representatives play a central role in the service delivery determination processes with communities just being marginally involved. Challenges posed by lack of inclusivity and proper consultation processes resulted in instances where communities remained passive

recipients of services. This in the main, resulted in poor services being delivered because proper service delivery needs analysis shall not have been undertaken, taking into account local preferences and the requisite resources requirements.

- **Empowerment – building people's capacity to move them from being passive victims of social processes to being active agents of change with the powers to decide, act and become real owners of the processes**

Empowerment entails providing the resources, information and knowledge required to carry out assigned responsibilities. As part of participatory governance, communities should be consulted and involved to make a contribution in the development of their areas. For meaningful participation to take place requires that the community and stakeholders be empowered with the necessary information and knowledge about all the issues that need to be addressed. Only in this way will participants be able to make decisions which are constructive, practical and achievable. The process of integrated development planning provides for stakeholders to be empowered so as to meaningfully participate in the planning for the future of their jurisdictional areas. In this way empowerment will ensure that participation is informed and thus enables stakeholders to take shared responsibility for the destiny of their municipality thereby providing benefit for the good of the broader stakeholder base.

Observations made at the Ekurhuleni Metro showed that stakeholder participating mechanisms, which could have enhanced the delivery capacity of the municipality, were weakly developed if not existent at all. Weak stakeholder participating mechanisms meant that stakeholder involvement in the visioning process was severely constrained. But even more importantly was the fact that generally there was a need for empowerment and education on the role purpose of the IDP planning system and how stakeholders could get more effectively involved. This would not only generate interest of stakeholders in civic matters but would enhance the decision-making and service delivery capacity through the coordination of a broader stakeholder base thereby legitimizing and transforming the Metro into an organ of the people.

- **Equitability – Consideration of all stakeholders' interests and priorities by exploring and identifying resources to share, manage and use them appropriately ensuring fair, just and reasonable room for full and active productive participation**

Apartheid has left South Africa with a terribly distorted legacy in terms of political, social and economic systems. Nowhere is this legacy more apparent physically, than in the politically inspired local government planning that has left the country with a racially and spatially fragmented landscape, urban sprawl, environmental degradation, massive structural problems and long travel times to work for the most disadvantaged. Part of the effort to remedy the situation was the need for a new developmental model of local government in South Africa. An approach to local government planning was developed and adopted to involve the entire municipality and its citizens in finding solutions to achieve sustainable long term development. An approach that entails the coordination of local and other spheres of government in a coherent plan to improve the quality of life for all the people living in an area.

An approach that takes into account existing conditions, problems and resources available for development as well as economic and social development for the area as a whole. This approach came to be known as integrated development planning. Within the Ekurhuleni Metro service delivery inequities still abound, reflecting on the issue of equity or lack thereof in the delivery of services. The IDP framework provides for productive participation but very little appears to be happening in communicating, consulting and mobilizing communities to take keen interest in determining suitable ways of delivering service based on a participatory visioning process.

Visioning – for collective conceptualization of needs, opportunities and dreams of the majority, while at the same time taking cognizance of minority views

The Ekurhuleni Metro has a multiplicity of stakeholders that range from customers, residents in various communities, business, students and the youth, lobby and advocacy groups, labour movements etc. For participatory governance to take hold, a set of relations need to be cultivated among and between the various stakeholders so as to collectively address the Metro's developmental problems and needs. For this set of relationships to take hold, various processes of consultation, communication and various forms of engagement are required.

These processes and mechanisms need to be clearly spelled out in a public participation strategy for the Ekurhuleni Metro as part of the service delivery visioning process. The observation at the Metro revealed the lack of a public participation strategy and respondents highlighted the absence of engagement by elected representatives in determining needs and allocating resources for delivering services. All these point to the lack of collective conceptualization of the needs, opportunities and dreams by the majority of stakeholders in the Ekurhuleni Metro. The continuing service delivery inequities that are characterised by service delivery protests, point to the lack of equity, inclusivity, facilitation and empowerment in the resource determination and allocation processes.

If the scale of the protests, regardless of frequency, is anything to go by, it means there are people who are still being left out of the service delivery loop, inadvertently or otherwise. This puts a challenge on the Ekurhuleni Metro to become the focal point for and take the leadership role in encouraging stakeholders to take responsibility for their own unique roles in the development and success of the various communities falling under their jurisdiction. Proper structured institutional arrangements should be established to facilitate stakeholder participatory processes in the collective city visioning. These institutional arrangements should be credible and legitimate with the ability to mobilize and deploy resources for implementation. A developmental city visioning approach should through the collective efforts of stakeholders seek to change the mindset of citizens to be realistic in the prioritisation and service delivery choices especially in the light of many competing needs with limited resources.

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Chapter 7

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7.   CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1.   Introduction

The objective of the study was to establish if there was meaningful stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management within the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council. The inclusion of stakeholders in strategic planning and management should be viewed as important to the Metro as it dispels any doubt as to whether there is a common understanding of what the future common direction is, given the limited resource capacity to address many competing service delivery needs. It is also important to note that the process of making fundamental improvements in service delivery by the Metro must start with an understanding of the strategic intent by all the stakeholders.

A literature research as well as an observation at the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council were undertaken to prove or disprove the hypothesis that "there is meaningful stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management at the Ekurhuleni Metro". The literature study on strategic planning and management in the private sector has highlighted the importance of strategic planning and management. Local government has also learnt lessons from the private sector, and has adopted some of its strategic planning and management practices and adapted them to suit public service delivery needs. In South Africa a planning framework called integrated development planning (IDP) was developed. This approach is intended to assist in avoiding wasteful expenditure and perpetuating past spending patterns and that the idea of adopting a more business-based approach is therefore not to run the council like a company but rather to ensure that scarce resources are spent effectively and that all citizens have access to at least a minimum level of basic services.

The absence of a public participation strategy at the Metro meant that methods of engagement, consultation and communication with stakeholders are not clearly spelled out, or properly followed for that matter. So is the identification of various stakeholders in terms of the needs, the roles that they can play in the planning processes, allocation of resources to facilitate their participation and empowerment in various planning processes. A study carried out at the Ekurhuleni Metro revealed that while strategic planning and management does take place, it does not involve various stakeholders in the processes in a manner that is contemplated by the integrated development planning (IDP) framework.

A comparison of the results of the literature study in terms of what should be happening regarding local government strategic planning and management, which includes best practices, and the results of the observation carried out at the Ekurhuleni Metro revealed that there are serious limitations in stakeholder involvement.

7.2.   Conclusions

7.2.1.   The IDP/strategic management and planning processes are not inclusive

The results of the observation showed that integrated development planning processes regarding involvement of stakeholder in the Ekurhuleni Metro are not inclusive. There is no public participation strategy to identify various types of stakeholders, manners of engaging them and communicating with them. Stakeholders are not divided further into categories of the unemployed and indigent, aged, hard to reach, students etc. so that suitable and appropriate engagement and communication mechanisms can be developed for them.

This makes it difficult for the Metro to reach various stakeholders to get them involved in the strategic planning and management processes, with the result that the majority of them do not only feel marginalised but do not receive even the most basic of services. The lack of resources to facilitate planning processes and empower stakeholders, means that even those that are willing cannot be part of the process because they do not understand their role or how to play it in the broader scheme of things, given the complexity of some of the planning processes and the language barrier for some and the sometimes intimidating public platforms that makes it difficult for some to articulate their views..

7.2.2.   The manner, in which IDP/strategic management and planning processes are carried out appear to simply legitimize decisions already taken by the municipality.

Adequate consultative processes with constituent communities regarding strategic planning and management were found to be severely lacking at the Ekurhuleni Metro. Rather information sessions were held with very little in the form of debates to elicit stakeholder input in the planning process. These information sessions were found to be far and few in between as well as being poorly attended. The failure of the Metro to timeously and widely distribute information on the planning processes meant little if no transparency and openness was being practiced by the Metro. This meant that very little participatory processes took place, to enhance and legitimize prioritisation and resource allocation processes.

7.2.3. The stakeholders' engagement processes are managed by the Metro

The stakeholder engagement process is managed by the Ekurhuleni Metro with very little say by stakeholders in terms of determining the agenda or their role in the planning process. Strategic planning and management processes at local government level are by their very nature driven by the municipality as the key stakeholder leader. Planning frameworks are developed by elected representatives to be cascaded to the various stakeholder levels for participation in the form of debates, information sessions and other types of input.

As the process drivers, the Ekurhuleni Metro inevitably develops the agenda with little or no input from stakeholders, given the poor consultative processes, communication and engagement mechanisms. Stakeholders also have very little input in determining their roles in the strategic planning and management processes, if anything stakeholders feel marginalised with things being done for them.

7.2.4. There is very little understanding and appreciation by stakeholders of socio-economic issues and technical processes involved in the visioning processes.

Stakeholders in Ekurhuleni Metro are not empowered with information and skills to appreciate and act on the complexities of resources determination, allocation and prioritisation processes. Strategic planning and management processes are by their very nature complex processes that are undertaken by people with appropriate levels of technical and management skills. Setting resources aside to facilitate and empower stakeholders would enhance the strategic planning and management processes greatly, thereby legitimizing any decisions taken. Very little resources are made available for empowering stakeholders and facilitating the engagement in the strategic planning and management processes. Lack of financial viability might be contributing to lack of funds to empower stakeholders and facilitate planning processes. The fact of the matter is that the majority of people do not have the level of education required to understand strategic planning and management processes.

But even more importantly, these planning processes have been introduced very recently and people are still not very familiar with them. In certain instances even municipal officials and elected representatives are still grappling with some of the issues because a planning culture has in fact not taken hold yet in municipalities around the country.

7.2.5.   Information is not disseminated timeously and widely

Dissemination of information at the Ekurhuleni Metro for strategic planning and management purposes is neither done timeously and widely nor is it packaged in a manner that facilitates stakeholder involvement in the planning process. Where information is disseminated it does not reach all the intended recipients because of challenges around access. The packaging of information to targeted recipients is also a challenge as it is mainly in English and for the majority of stakeholders such information would require translating further into local languages for ease of comprehension. Information session meetings that are held, have been found to be far and few in between with very unsatisfactory attendances. Poor effort on the part of the Metro regarding provision of information to stakeholders is linked to the absence of a public participation strategy which could have identified information needs of the various stakeholders and provided accordingly for that

7.3.   Recommendations

7.3.1.   Developing and implementing a public participation strategy

One of the major findings of the study on stakeholder involvement at the Ekurhuleni Metro was the absence of a public participation strategy. A public participation strategy is provided for in the IDP framework and would clearly spell out how the Metro plans to engage with the various stakeholders in the IDP processes. Participatory processes are central to the substance of a democratic system of government, where people are part of the decision-making machinery of the state. People participation enhances decision-making as well as legitimizing actions that flow from decisions taken.

Development of a public participation strategy is crucial for stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management at the Ekurhuleni Metro. The strategy would include methods of engagement and communication as well as defining various stakeholders in terms of their information needs including empowerment initiatives to help them grapple easily with some of the planning technical processes and jargon. Once the strategy is in place an implementation plan would then be drawn up in terms of how the strategy will be operationalized including resource allocations for various participation activities

7.3.2. Strengthening ward committees

Ward Committees are a very important link between the Council and various stakeholders, communities in particular. While their roles have been clearly spelled out, there appeared to be challenges around the actual playing of the roles by those designated with the responsibility. Central to this appears to be lack of understanding of principles of participatory processes and the actual functioning of municipalities in the provision of services. In certain instances people appointed to serve as ward committee members seem to confuse their role with that of political party organizers. Remuneration commensurate with responsibilities should also be considered for ward committee members to ensure commitment and optimal performance of duties. In the literature study the one aspect that differentiated South African IDP processes from other city visioning processes was the establishment of institutional arrangements in the form of ward committees. It is thus imperative that adequate resources be set aside for building the capacity of ward committees through training and mentorship programmes so that they can meaningfully facilitate the interface between the Metro and the various constituent communities for effective provision of services. Working hand in hand with ward committees are community development workers whose role is to act as a link between communities and the three spheres of government. Yet a survey conducted reported lack of cooperation between the ward committees and community development workers with overlaps and duplication in roles and responsibilities. This particular aspect of role definition between the two role players need to be addressed as a matter of urgency to ensure synergy in facilitating participatory processes in municipal decision-making.

7.3.3. Setting adequate resources aside for empowerment and facilitation of stakeholders

The issue of the adequacy of financial resources to deliver services is already a contentious one, let alone requirement of additional resources for other purposes. However it needs to be noted that strategic planning and management processes are by their very nature complex processes. But even more importantly is the fact that the culture of planning in South Africa is still very new and most people including municipal officials and elected representatives are still grappling with that.

For them to meaningfully engage in the processes they need to be helped with facilitation and explanation of some of the complex processes and technical terms. The question of empowerment of stakeholders and their facilitation in the planning processes is equally important if they are to make any meaningful contribution. Part of the annual budget of the Metro should include funds set aside for empowerment of stakeholders and facilitating the participation in the IDP processes. This will enable them to understand and appreciate some of the socio-economic issues and technical processes involved in the visioning processes including the complexities of resources determination, allocation and prioritisation. Empowerment and facilitation will enhance transparency and accountability in municipal governance. Empowerment according to McCarney et al (1995) should not be restricted to formal institution of government but should also be extended to local communities.

7.3.4. Translate technical processes and jargon into layman's terms and local language respectively

Information is an important currency of exchange where there is a network of relationship amongst and between various role players such as in a municipality. Provision of information enhances openness and transparency thereby building trust amongst the various network players. It is therefore very important that information of the IDP processes be made available to all stakeholders for their meaningful participation.

Not only should information be made available but it should be packaged in such a manner that it is capable of being used and for an average person that means some of the complex technical processes need to be simplified and the English language in which the documents are written translated into local languages for ease of comprehension. This might be a very costly exercise but the important thing is that people can understand what is being discussed and decided upon and be part of those processes.

7.3.5. Develop innovative ways of bringing on board "hard to reach people".

For participatory processes to have the desired effect they need to be inclusive and that means identifying, locating and bringing on board everyone who has a stake in the Metro. Although bringing everyone is not practically possible, the majority of people can be reached if effort and creativity are put into existing and new ways of communicating, consulting and engaging with stakeholders.

Most participatory processes have a serious limitation of only going as far as people who are readily available. If people who are readily available are in the minority it means the minority will take decisions that affect the majority of people. The study found that methods of engagement, consultation and communication were not only weak but were targeting the easy to reach people who were very few. Although public meetings are good examples of involvement methods of engaging hard-to-reach groups, other new communication techniques could include mobile texting and community information plasma screens.

Partnerships of working with voluntary organisations and social enterprise organisations can also facilitate identification of hard-to-reach groups. The Metro needs to recognize the role that social movements and social networks can play in furthering understanding of processes of social integration and overcoming fragmentation and social inequality. These social networks can create opportunities for joint action by local communities, public sector, NGOs and the private sector in helping to achieve optimal inclusivity in city visioning processes.

7.3.6. Improving the interface between Metro government and socially based institutions

One of the biggest challenges facing local authorities in South Africa today is the poor interface between the formal system of government (elected representatives and officials) and socially based institutions such as private sector, civil associations, community organisations and social movements. This is about bringing on board stakeholders who previously were considered marginally involved in public policy formulation and implementation, to not only strengthen the Metro's delivery capacity but to also enhance governance. The incorporation of other agencies into the governance system raises the issue of functional allocation among urban stakeholders and the need for a better interface that could have the ripple effect of improving amongst others, communication between elected representatives and constituent communities. This could to some extent, help address the multiplicity of problems that are at the center of the spade of protestations about poor service delivery.

7.3.7. Integrating risk governance into the strategic planning and management process

It is important to develop a city vision and clarify objectives and benefits of the Metro's service delivery programme and be confident about the synergy that will flow from among the various stakeholder contributions and the ultimate payoff. Flowing from this, overarching goals can then be disaggregated into discreet well-defined programmes and projects with each being subjected to hardnosed analysis including cost-benefit, so that there can be understanding of how each service delivery programme and project can be implemented. Parallel to these planning processes should be a careful look for any collateral damage that may occur during implementation and factor any uncertainties/risks arising or that may arise into the planning processes.

The successful implementation of the Metro strategy can be affected negatively by these uncertain events called risks. While the management of risk can be undertaken at the executive and management levels, at the Council level where the visioning takes place, there is a need to put into place proper risk governance arrangements to ensure that there are frameworks and methodologies for anticipating and dealing with or mitigating risks and the impact that these risks can have on the realization of the Metro's vision. This could help strengthen the current contingency planning that is being undertaken as part of the planning process.

7.3.8. Strengthening the alignment of the organisation to the strategy

Organisational alignment refers to "how the various component parts of the organization synchronize their activities to create integration and synergy" (Kaplan and Norton, 2006, 13). Organisations that wish stakeholders to contribute to the successful implementation of their strategy share details of their strategy with them, and actively encourage them to come up with ways in which successful implementation can be achieved. The findings of the study and the conclusion reached were that there is very little in the form of stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management in the Metro. Central to the non-involvement could be poor organisational alignment of the organisation with the strategy regarding both internal and external stakeholders.

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Appendix A - Questionnaire

1.   **Community representatives**

1.1.   Does the current planning system allow for fair access and opportunity for your members to participate?

1.2.   Are you aware of the council's public participation strategy and if you are aware how is this strategy helping the council to meaningfully engage with stakeholders

1.3.   Does the method of community involvement fit the purpose by allowing stakeholders to participate at the appropriate level?

1.4.   What specific methods are being used to get community involvement and are they enabling participation?

1.5.   Is capacity building provided to enable members of the communities to participate in the planning processes?

1.6.   How are the inputs of the stakeholders captured for inclusion into the IDP document?

1.7.   How are the marginalised groups identified and helped to engage in the planning processes?

1.8.   Are current resources provided to facilitate community involvement adequate?

1.9.   Are members of the communities engaged earlier on, so as to be alerted to the benefits of the planning process?

2.   **Business community representatives**

2.1.   How are your members consulted in the planning processes?

2.2.   Are you aware of the public participation strategy of the council?

2.3.   How are the inputs of the members captured for inclusion into the IDP document?

2.4.   Are your members happy with the current planning processes in terms of manner and opportunities of involvement?

2.5.   Any good practices in the existing planning processes and areas requiring improvement.

2.6.   Would your members prefer earlier involvement (be made aware of the opportunities that the planning processes offer)?

2.7.   Has the current planning system benefited your members in any way?

3.   The Council (Mayor and Speaker)

3.1.   Does the Council have a public participation strategy for engaging stakeholders?

3.2.   If not how does the council go about its consultation processes?

3.3.   If the public participation strategy does exist, does it:

3.3.1. Classify stakeholders into different categories?

3.3.2. Define manner of engagement of each category of stakeholders?

3.3.3. Define channels of communication with each stakeholder category?

3.3.4. Define roles and responsibilities of each category of stakeholders?

3.4.   How does the council reach hard-to-reach groups?

3.5.   Are resources provided to facilitate engagement of the hard-to-reach groups?

3.6.   Are resources provided to empower marginalised groups?

4.   Other stakeholders

4.1.   According to your observation are current public participation processes inclusive?

4.2.   Are you aware of the council's public participation strategy?

4.3.   Would you say current planning processes are fair, transparent and open to all?

4.4.   Would you say marginalised groups are properly represented i.e. adequately consulted, empowered and planning processes facilitated)

Appendix B: Consent to participate

Thesis Title: **Stakeholder Involvement in Strategic Planning and Management at the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council**

You are invited to participate in the research that aims at establishing the existence of stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management at the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council.

All information collected from the participants will be kept secure and only made available to the researcher and the supervisor. Participation is entirely voluntary and the participants can withdraw any time before the completion of the data collection.

Where possible interviews may be audio taped and transcribed so that the researcher can review the discussions. In the recorded information and final report your name would not be revealed.

Any concerns regarding the nature and the conduct of this research should be directed to the supervisor **Daniel F Botha, Centre for Knowledge Dynamics & Decision Making** Department of Information Science, University of Stellenbosch, **dfbotha@sun.ac.za**, 021 808 3803

Consent by participant - I agree to participate and where required be audio taped for this study. The study has been explained to me to my satisfaction.

Signature/Printed Name of Participant   Date

Signature/Printed name of the Researcher   Date