

Minority Front Mayoral Candidate Patrick Pillay for Ethekwini Municipality on Leadership and development – LGE 2011

INTRODUCTION:

I decided to run for Mayor because I have got the full support of my party Leadership, MF members and my family. As the first citizen of the City, I know the importance of making decisions that are impartial and non-controversial.

The Mayor's position and decisions on matters have important consequences therefore it is important that the Mayor is impartial all the time.

I have lived in this Municipality my entire life and know very well that there is a need for a lot more developments in terms of, financial, social and economic transformation.

Currently the Mayor is appointed politically from the ruling party, but I would like to see the Electoral system changed whereby the Mayor is elected by the Citizens.

When elected as the Mayor, I will make fair decisions that do not undermine any communities that will create public protests. I will always be in touch with the citizens, attending functions and events in all areas and not be selective. The citizens will expect me to always be around therefore i will never adopt the "Mayor by correspondence" approach, but rather be hands on. I will never be an absent Mayor.

The Minority Front is of the firm view that Durban deserves a sober leadership that is not drunk with power. We need to restore the dignity and integrity of the city and inculcate investors and ratepayers' confidence.

Mission:

The Minority Front mission is to run a mean, clean and a debt free city. Listen to the citizens, businesses and officials about potential changes to Municipal Legislation thereby creating better opportunities for our citizens to experience a good quality of life. Ensuring that the budget processes is fully inclusive of input from all sectors of Durban and monies are appropriated and utilized correctly and Ward funding to the 103 wards are fair and equitable.

Vision:

My vision is to adopt small term development targets that will accomplish long term goals. OVERHAULING THE WAY WE DO BUSINESS AS THE CITY BY IMPLEMENTING SOCIO AND ECONOMIC STRATEGIES OF MAKING LOCAL GOVERNMENT THE PEOPLE'S GOVERNMENT FOR THE PEOPLE WITHIN THE PRINCIPLES OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY THAT IS PARAMOUNT TO GOOD GOVERNANCE.

Cities Finances – Auditors Report:

The state of Local Government in Ethekewini is never short of controversy, and the cancer of maladministration will continue to spread unless strong leadership and firm decisions are taken to STOP the bulges of the perpetrators.

The Minority Front strongly condemns the administrative turnabout of the financial administration of the City. The city has been swamped with much controversy since the earth shattering revelations of the auditor General report exposing over R520 million rands in irregular expenditure.

When the respect of multiparty and participatory democracy is undermined and minority rights are infringed, the prosperity of the city is stifled and dictatorship reveals its ugly head.

The flouting of the tender procedures and the blatant abuse of section 36 of the Supply Chain Policy by officials were the primary reasons for the forensic report. Councillors also received tenders whilst in the service of the state which is prohibited in terms of the supply chain management policy.

Service Delivery – Housing:

Service delivery has been slow and painful for residents, who banked on Housing promises of the ANC during elections, which never saw the light of day. The Municipality boasts the building of 16000 housing units per annum, but thousands of these units had to be either demolished or rehabilitated with costs running into millions of rands. EG: Cornubia Housing which has been promised to the Kennedy Road informal settlements and will not go to the surrounding areas like Phoenix.

Early Morning Market Warwick Avenue / Closure of the Beachfront Fishing Piers to Fishermen:

Bad decisions will always come back to haunt the city at the expense of the ratepayer. The decision to relocate the historical Heritage site of the Early Morning Market in Warwick Avenue against the will of the traders and Amafa has demonstrated the arrogance of the ruling party. The closure of piers on the Durban beachfront to fishermen has started protest action by the subsistence fishermen whom rely on fishing as their primary source of income for their families. This action contradicts the principles of the cities poverty alleviation objectives.

Moratorium on Religious Sites / Ward Committees:

Restrictions on the release of religious sites in certain areas show a total disrespect for religious practises. A good example is the Albert Park that is used by a church. Parks are destroyed with the Religious organisation having no alternative. The establishment of Ward Committees was a total disaster whereby ward committee members were not elected in accordance to geographical areas thus stifling the holistic ward representations.

HOWEVER,

There is hope for the EtheKwini Municipality and the gloom can be transformed to boom if the leadership of the city act in a responsible, mature and apolitical manner.

Indigent Policies:

The Minority Front will be implementing targeted Indigent processes of ensuring that the benefactors are the poor and deserving people of the city. Free basic services are not given to everyone who will enjoy a free ride at the expense of the poor but rather is targeted. A proper poverty mapping of the citizens in the city is necessary in order to make the indigent policy functional and implemented.

Private Public Partnership (PPP):

Entering into Public Private Partnerships will be the key for the city to reduce its overheads and provide much needed scarce services to its citizens. Where the Municipality lack the skills and infrastructure, instead of reinventing the wheel and employing high charging consultants PPP'S are the way to go. When the city engages in the Private Public partnerships system, the city must ensure that bona-fide businesses or organisation have the necessary skills and background to perform the services required of them.

The City must also engage with civic bodies, Faith based Organisations and NGO's in order to address the social needs of the citizens. Strengthening partnerships with Women's organisations is another critical partnership that needs to be explored.

Crime – Metro Police:

The crime prevention units like the Metro Police needs to be based in local offices to increase civilian policing and narrow response times to prevent crime. The city needs to increase the Metro Police Officers and have clear police visibility at Shopping Centres and Malls.

Sentinels should be established with regular beach patrols to safeguard our visitors and tourists.

Primary Health Care:

The primary Health care of Clinics needs to be better managed. The shortage of staff at clinics is causing undue stress on the staff complement. Therefore there is an urgent need to employ more nurses and reduce the overload of work of all staff.

Capital Budget:

There should be an equitable distribution of the budget in all wards based on the need and IDP. As the Mayor, i will work with the administrators and City Officials to reach a budget that falls within the parameters of the city's income.

Employment / Tenders / Corruption:

The city must employ the best person for the job based on merit. We must weed out nepotism and stop jobs for pals and families by implementing policies that will warrant strong disciplinary actions against people violating these principles.

If corruption is identified in any area of the administrative system, the Special Investigation Unit and the Hawks must be immediately called in to root out corrupt officials. The tenderpreneurship will be a thing of the past when a monitoring system is put into place to keep a "Hawks" eye on tender processes. The Minority Front will adopt an open tender process for all transactions of tenders and will stop the use of Section 36 of the Supply Chain Management Policy.

Ward Committees:

Ward Committees must be elected based on the geographical area of the Ward and the skills they possess; this will ensure effective service delivery. Filling of Vacancies in the Municipality is paramount and will enhance service delivery. Community Liaison Officers (CLO's) must be apolitical and not promote any political party's agenda. CLO's plays a very important communication role of transferring information and empowering communities of the Municipal processes and their rights. Therefore they must be skilled to carry out and build relationships between the community and the Municipality.

SMME'S, (Local Economic Development):

In order to improve the economy and create opportunities for business including SMME's, the by laws restricting home based business and street vending needs to be relaxed.

Global Warming / Climate Change:

Greening our city should now be also be a priority in view of climate change. Recreation areas for children must be protected and included in the city's IDP. When Housing developments are planned, an holistic approach of including recreational facilities must be included and not have our open spaces and parks destroyed like in Phoenix as an example.

Housing:

The Housing problems can only be resolved if Durban creates a housing register. This system will alleviate queue jumping and fraud.

Housing must be built in accordance to the Municipal and NHBRC standards. Fiscal dumping to renovate flats, hostels and poor workmanship will stop; because all Housing contracts will be systematically inspected for defaults and the contractor will face the full might of the law in terms of breaches and penalties.

Blacklisting Policy:

A black listing policy will be fully functional and any contractor violating the terms and conditions and standards of workmanship will be blacklisted without hesitation. Political interferences in the execution of the work of the administration must stop.

Religious Sites:

The Minority Front will lift the moratorium on religious sites in Ethekewini and adopt a process of engagement with all religious Leaders. The MF will demand that all religious Leaders be paid a salary like the Amakosi and given proper housing.

Revenue Management System / Rates rebate for single parent:

On Going training for staff to operate the Revenue Management System is essential. Rates rebate for single parent needs to be considered, especially if they are unemployed.

Conclusion:

As the Mayor of Durban, I will ensure that good governance principles are upheld and lead by example. The Executive Committee must adopt a multiparty approach based on the fundamental principles of democracy. Decisions for the City must not be taken in political Offices or Caucus or in a vacuum but must be fully inclusive. A lot has to be done and it can only be achieved as a collective. Corruption must be stamped out and the MF's message to every citizen is that we must "SAVE OUR CITY" AND VOTE MF ON THE 18TH May.