

New SALGA Chairperson makes his first visit to the Presidency at the Meeting of the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission

8 September 2011

The newly elected SALGA Chairperson Cllr Thabo Manyoni and one of the Deputy Chairpersons Cllr Mpho Nawa, will today take Local Government proposals to the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission. The new National Executive Committee (NEC) has hit the ground running with its mandate derived from the SALGA National Conference held a week ago.

SALGA will present to the Commission key infrastructure issues that cut across all the infrastructure sectors such water, sanitation, roads and public transport, electricity distribution, and solid waste management. Organised Local Government has identified and proposes on six issues that need urgent attention as follows:

1. The decaying infrastructure that requires refurbishment and replacement

- SALGA proposes the establishment of a national municipal infrastructure refurbishment fund that will to provide for the rehabilitation/ refurbishment of municipal infrastructure at the required scale.
- SALGA proposes the establishment of national GIS based databases and national programmes to collect data manage information on an ongoing basis on the state of municipal infrastructure starting with priority sectors such as roads, water services and electricity.

2. Institutional Issues for services delivery management

As part of the implementation of the LGTAS:

- During the first year of this 5 year council term, provincial and national departments facilitate and support all municipalities that never formally considered alternative institutional options for services delivery to do so for at least the water services and solid waste management sectors. In the Year 2, all council decisions in respect of preferred institutional options must be implemented;
- A National minimum benchmark organogram guideline must be set for each category of municipalities, based on their functions and differentiated capability. Then the S component of the Equitable Share for municipalities must seek to fund this capacity requirement for poor households in the municipal area.

3. Funding & pricing of services

- The municipal services pricing policy especially the ideology of 100% self financial sustainability should be reviewed
- There should be more urgency in the establishment of an independent and effective economic regulator in the water sector
- There is a need for more urgency in the review of the local government fiscal framework

4. Bulk Infrastructure

- Organised Local Government supports the process of establishing a bulk infrastructure fund but also proposes that there be an intervention that seeks ensure that there are appropriate institutional arrangements for managing investments and O&M in both bulk and connector infrastructure

5. Urban - rural balance in the design of SA municipalities

- A new concept of a rural local government institution (a rural municipality) should be designed including a different fiscal framework and powers and functions for it.
- In the short term the implementation of rural rates and service charges be considered in order to finance provision of infrastructure services in these areas.
- Municipalities which are predominantly rural must be supported to develop and implement rural infrastructure development strategies that facilitate economic activity in rural area.

6. Technical Skills shortage

- SALGA is proposing that the Department: Higher Education & Training, SALGA, the relevant sector Departments, relevant SETAs, ESKOM, Water Boards and CoGTA establish a national training facilitation partnership whose focus will be to improve the number of graduates in technical fields form further education, training and tertiary institutions and experiential learning of new graduates and artisan

The full document giving the background and context of these proposals is available on the SALGA website.

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