

## Office of the Chief Executive

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# **MEDIA BRIEFING**

## **1. PROPOSED SECURITY LEVY**

Council at its first ordinary meeting on 02 February 2015 discussed a proposed security levy, which is proposed to finance the operations of the City Police. Since then, there has been public outcry on this proposal and its effects and possible impacts to the residents of Windhoek.

In 1999 when the Police Act (Act 19 of 1990) was amended to allow Municipalities to establish their Municipal Police Services, Section 43 (c) of the Act is only amongst others dealing with the establishment of the Municipal Police Services; and financial empowerment was not considered, leaving Council to fund policing operations from the normal municipal income, and this has become a financial burden to the City, which it can no longer be able to sustain.

Since its establishment, City Police has played a major role as far as roads safety and crime prevention that went beyond the expectation of everybody, and the request for service by residents have increased drastically.

In order for the City of Windhoek to continue living up to its commitment of creating a safe environment for our residents and visitors in a rapidly growing city, we tried all possible means to get the necessary funds. So, the proposed levy is an option found currently suitable to lessen the financial burden put on the City.

(The **Security levy** is an amount of money to be charged every month on all rateable properties to cover the cost incurred by the City of Windhoek in carrying out crime prevention operations).

It should therefore be on record that, this is a proposal which is not yet implemented. It will still go through various phases of consultations with all relevant stakeholders starting with the Regional Council and then the public. Only after that exercise is concluded, will it come back to Council for approval thereof, obviously depending on inputs from the consultations.

## **2. DISCONTINUATION OF MUNICIPAL SERVICES**

The City of Windhoek makes an important contribution to poverty alleviation and economic development of our people, through provision of basic services and investing in infrastructure and associated services that are critical for economic activities. To deliver these essential services effectively, the City relies on its own revenue, which is composed mainly of property rate taxes and charges for providing water, electricity, refuse removal, sanitation and other services. However, one critical question is what happens when the ability of municipalities to generate adequate levels of own revenue is constrained? As it stands to this end, the non-payment of consumer debts, pose a serious threat to the financial health of the City of Windhoek.

The consumer debts encompass late payments for property rates, services and other municipal charges, as well as amounts that are deemed irrecoverable.

There is no doubt that this debt will in the near future cripple the cash position of the City of Windhoek and ability to fulfil its statutory mandate. Consumer debts can also reduce the finance needed for the delivery of basic services, infrastructure, maintenance and upgrading. In addition, it can prompt the need for greater cross-subsidization potentially overburdening the existing tax base. Outstanding payments also represent foregone resources that could be used to improve the living conditions of the residents of the City of Windhoek.

It's the civic responsibility of all customers, be it businesses, government institution and/or residential customers to pay their municipal debt timeously. To address the situation squarely, the City of Windhoek has embarked upon a concerted and vigorous effort to reduce the said debt book as matter of urgency. To that effect, all consumers are urged to settle their outstanding accounts as a matter of urgency in order to avoid discontinuation of services which the City vowed to embark on as from 28 February 2015.

### **3. THE WATER SITUATION**

Water is a critically limited natural resource in Namibia. NamWater as the bulk supplier to Windhoek has a supply system heavily reliant on erratic rainfall and the accumulation of surface water. With the low rainfall being experienced in the central areas of Namibia in the current rainy season, the supply levels in the relevant dams are precariously low.

Notwithstanding the current situation, low or no inflow into the supply dams will almost certainly create a critical water shortage in the Central Areas of Namibia, including the capital City of Windhoek.

Residents of the City of Windhoek are therefore made aware of the current situation and urged to save water through the cutting down or omission of non-essential water intensive activities. These include:

- Irrigation of gardens;
- Washing of vehicles;
- Filling up of pools;
- Reduce your water consumption by at least 10%.



Let us work together to secure the future water supply to the City

### **4. THE CITY OF WINDHOEK CCTV CAMERAS**

In response to the media allegations by one of the daily newspaper regarding the effectiveness of the Close Circuit Television (CCTV) Camera in the City, here are the facts:

Since the establishment of the Windhoek City Police Service, concerted efforts were made to ensure that the City Police delivers effective and efficient service in both crime prevention and road safety. From the onset, the use of technology was identified as a critical (integral) component of the integrated crime prevention and road safety methodology that the City Police has to embark upon.

As a result, during 2008 the City of Windhoek invited expression of interest from experts in the electronic security field. More than twenty (20) applications were received these includes local, regional and international companies. Through a thorough selection process, one company was chosen and commenced with the project, and the project was finally commissioned in 2010. It is important to reflect that the identification and selection was a joint exercise with our key stakeholders in the security sector (industry).

As time went on, the need to revisit the project was identified and new tenderers were invited. This was prompted by lesson learned during the project level and the fast change in technology. Three (3) companies were awarded tenders for the supply and installation of cameras while one company was awarded the tender to configure the wireless network. Currently the system is operating on a licenced wireless network covering the whole City. The new generation of technology introduced delivers effective real-time wireless video streaming without interference yet producing high definition quality images.

Due to limited funds, the City was only able to install 64 cameras at public places and close to 300 at municipal offices and premises. Twenty five (25) more cameras are to be installed before June 2015. These sites include major shopping centre, major traffic intersections, most of the CBD as well as tourist attraction sites around the City.

The installations of cameras yielded good results in the field of prevention, detection and arrest.

#### **SUCCESS:**

We have observed major reduction of up to 80% property related crime (such as theft out of motor vehicle, armed robbery, bag snatching, ATM fraud, drinking in

**public as well as soliciting of prostitution**) at sites where CCTV are installed (post street mall, Independence Avenue (Bushman Art), Ausspannplatz , Eros Post Office, Eveline Street, Hofmeyer walking trail (Lover's Hill), CBD and other shopping centres all over the City.

Moreover our weekly operational statistics is informing us that, property related crimes have migrated to residential areas, the CBD peripheries and areas not monitored, therefore our plans is to extend cameras to other most affected public places.

As a learning organisation aimed at building its own capacity, we have trained a team that is dealing with day-to-day maintenance and installations. We are proud of their commitments to their duties.

To date, no malfunctioning of CCTV systems were experienced and our team is capable of dealing with any situation, and this has also made the process more cost effective. The monitoring of cameras is a joint exercise between the City Police and Namibian Police.

To embrace the changes in technology, the network was upgraded in 2012 at the same time we have moved to camera that have night vision and high definitions capabilities.

I therefore would like to inform residents and visitors of our beautiful City that, CCTV as a crime prevention measure that form part of the larger integrated crime prevention and road safety system is very much effective and properly maintained by a dedicated team. It is being supported by other operational methods such zonal policing and intelligence led policing and is being monitored 24hrs.

It should thus be on record and noted that, the allegations in the article as appeared in one of the local English daily newspaper as earlier alluded to - is not only aimed at tarnishing the good name and reputation of the City of Windhoek in general and that of the City Police in particular; but also written by non-patriotic, insensitive and inconsiderate reporters. The article which contains unconfirmed and in accurate

reports has also send a wrong impression to the public and visitors that they are not safe in our beautiful City.

Dear residents be assured that about 20 million investment that the City put in the CCTV for the last six years (2009-2014) is a public money well spent and we are determined to invest more in the use of technology to ensure that high level safety prevails in the City.

On this note, we are inviting all interested members of the public, including responsible journalists, to visit our CCTV Control Room and ascertain themselves with the facts on ground.

Finally, with regards to the report on investigation of the City Police Chief, the fact is that the report is based on written submission to the Chief Executive Officer by a member of the City Police in early 2014. The submission was handed over to the Namibian Police to investigate and was submitted in November 2014 to the former Chief Executive. Currently it is with the Acting Chief Executive who will handle it accordingly (policy and procedures).

Thank you very much for your unwavering support in serving our City. We remain committed to delivering effective and efficient services, thereby enhancing the lives of all our people.

**THANK YOU ONCE MORE!**

**ISSUED BY:**

**City of Windhoek**

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