

Mayoral Address in the Ordinary Council Meeting of the George Municipality Council on 24 April 2025

Good morning, Speaker, Aldermen, Deputy Mayor, Whip of Council, Councillors, Municipal Manager, Directors, Officials, Members of the public, the media, and to our residents tuned in on our YouTube Channel.

Since my last Mayoral Address we have been hard at work, keeping the commitment that I have made to our residents, to not only hear them, but to address their concerns, to act on their concerns. On the 27th of March this year, Council approved the draft Budget and IDP for the upcoming financial year. As required and in line with Chapter 4 of the Municipal Systems Act, we are now embarking on the next critical step in this process: engaging with you, our residents and most important stakeholders. We are currently visiting all 28 wards across our municipal area hosting meetings, that are designed to not only provide feedback on your ward priorities, but also to unpack the potential impact that the new budget will have on our households, businesses, and the broader community. Most importantly, these engagements provide our residents with the opportunity to have their voices heard and to contribute their ideas and concerns regarding the draft budget. I wish to thank our residents for their rigorous participation in the sessions that have already taken place. Furthermore, I wish to urge residents who have yet to have these sessions hosted in their ward to participate as well. We want to make sure that your inputs are heard. Thank you to our team led by Dr Haarhoff and Ald Iona Kritzingler.

Yesterday, I had the privilege of celebrating World Book Day at New Dawn Park and Pacaltsdorp Primary Schools with our Whip of Council and Cllrs Kleynhans and Roelfse, I had the opportunity see the amazing work being carried out by Social Department, specifically in terms of Youth Development and how EPWP workers are being used to assist children who may have difficulty reading. I wish to commend Jonel Kerspuy and her team on their work, reading is such an important skill, and I was amazed to see the enthusiasm displayed by the learners and teaching staff at these schools at the reading activities they were being exposed to.

Now, I will give you all a brief overview of what some of our departments have been up to over the past couple of months.

Planning and Development

In terms of spatial planning, the implementation components of the Ilisoletu project in Thembaletu is maintaining momentum with the upgrades to the sport fields, which is being enhanced to include CCTV cameras to promote safety. The sports committee will be managing a 5 km run route event and the construction of pathways, are already visible along various streets and areas in wards 13, 12 and 9 in Thembaletu. The technical processes for

the preparation of land for mixed use developments, including industrial, residential, and commercial development and educational facilities in the Metro Industrial and Gwayang areas have been in process for more than a year and the draft proposals will be made public in the coming public participation process in the next few months. Here I need to commend our new MMC for Planning and Development, Cllr Chantelle Kyd as well as our Acting Director Henriette Koch.

Strategic Services

In terms of economic development, the Pacaltsdorp Micro Enterprise Facility has seen the completion of the final inspection for phase 1 and the contractor is attending to the snags list in preparation for Phase 2. Funds have been allocated for the continuation of this project in the coming financial year.

Our LED Department will be hosting a Supplier Indaba which will provide access to state-owned enterprises and parastatals supplier opportunities. This Indaba will be hosted in May. We will host skills Indabas in Uniondale and George. Residents should keep a watch on our municipal platforms for dates. Our councillors will also be asked to communicate this through to their ward structures so that everyone is made aware. Thanks to our relevant departments and Alderlady Kritzinger for her oversight role.

Community Safety and Mobility

Community Safety and Mobility is a newly established Directorate since 1 March 2025, which is being led by the Acting Director, Ms Lee-Anne Meiring. The Community Safety component includes Fire, Rescue & Disaster Management, Law Enforcement, Traffic Services & Safer City. Mobility on the other hand includes Public Transport and Fleet management services. The highlights for this directorate for the month of March 2025 are as follows:

Fire, Rescue & Disaster Management presented a large public education at M. Mateza L.P. School in Thembaletu, regarding fire safety and awareness for 1200 children and trained 22 teachers as fire marshals. Teachers and children were very happy with the training provided and all confirmed that it was extremely valuable training that should be done at all schools and on a more regular basis.

Traffic Services is pleased that the upgrading of the Uniondale DLTC facility has been completed and awaiting final registration from RTMC. Law Enforcement has implemented a zero-tolerance approach regarding illegal dumping. The officials issued fines to individuals in contravention of our by-laws. A total amount of 8 criminal arrests were made with the new powers bestowed on our peace officers who have been trained.

Our next training for Peace Officers starts 5 May where the City of Cape Town will be assisting with the training our staff, we have also appointed seven new assistant law

enforcement officers for our rapid response unit. We have also implemented modern technology at the George Driving Licence Testing Centre which replaces the traditional handwritten learner's licence test. It is now fully computerised and offers enhanced accuracy, efficiency, and security. The tests are also available in all 11 official languages. Residents will also be relieved to hear that we are in the process of consulting with our unions regarding our 24-hour shift system, so we are well underway with the implementation of this system and cannot wait for it to get started.

I would like to thank Cllr Brendon Adams and the Acting Director, Ms. Lee-Anne Meiring for all their hard work and dedication, this department is in good hands, and we are excited about its success and achievements.

Environmental Services

This department has been extremely busy. In March we officially launched the skip placement project. Speaker, you will recall that in our February Ordinary Council Meeting I informed residents that we have taken delivery of 29 skips, and that we will place these skips in every ward across the municipal area. I am proud to announce that we launched this project in wards 1, 14, and 16 last month and our councillors have been vocal about the difference that having these skips in their ward have made. I have said it before, Speaker, and I will say it again, this department is hard at work to keep George Municipality clean and green, and I would like to thank Cllr Monique Simmers and our Director Dawie Adonis for their work in this space.

Corporate Services and Human Resources

Our Corporate Services have completed a series of capital projects over the last couple of months, these include:

- Installing a security fence at the Siembamba Creche.
- Acquired a 30 KVA generator to provide electricity to all the halls during planned and unplanned power outages.
- We have painted the interior of our Parkdene Community Hall/
- Officially handed over the Zamuxolo ECD in Thembaletu.

Speaker, I must take a moment to speak about the excellent work done at Zamuxolo ECD. Ms. Lucy, the principal, her teaching staff and learners were filled with joy when we officially handed over this facility to them. It is important that as George Municipality that we invest in the future of the next generation within our mandate, and we have successfully done so with this facility. I must thank our MMCs Cllrs Johan Du Toit and Nonnie Mbete, our Director Bevan Ellman and Deputy Director Mr. Edward Ganza for the beautiful facility, you have done us extremely proud.

Speaker, it is clear that George Municipality is moving forward. I would like to thank our staff for their hard work and dedication under the excellent leadership of our Municipal Manager, Mr. Godfrey Louw, our directors, and our officials. To our councillors, the executive, and mayoral committee, we have so much work to do, but I know that we are more than willing and able to take up this task. Thank you.

Ald Jackie von Brandis
Executive Mayor