

**5.
ADDRESSING SKILLS SHORTAGES : A STRATEGIC APPROACH**

AANSPREEK VAN SKAARSVAARDIGHEDE : 'N STRATEGIESE BENADERING

4/3/14

W Zybrands
10 July 2008

(028) 313 8003 Office of the Municipal Manager

1. Executive Summary/Bestuursopsomming

The purpose of this report is to address skills shortages in the Overstrand municipal area and to submit a strategic approach to the Executive Mayor.

Die doel van die verslag is om skaarsvaardighede in die Overstrand munisipale area aan te spreek en om 'n strategiese benadering aan die Uitvoerende Burgemeester voor te lê.

2. Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan Reference

N/A

3. Compliance with Strategic Priority

Provision of democratic and accountable governance

4. Delegated Authority

Executive Mayor

5. Legal Requirements

N/A

6. Background/Discussion

It is common cause that the Overstrand Municipality in many respects experiences skills shortages. These are especially prevalent in the technical, financial, I.T. and legal/administrative fields.

There may be various reasons therefor including:

- the general skills shortage throughout South Africa;

- the “poaching” by larger and financially stronger institutions e.g. metropolitan municipalities and ESKOM due to a better salary structure;
- the cost of living in a coastal municipality as house prices are often beyond the means of municipal employees;
- the relatively low salary structure of Overstrand due to the TASK process not yet finalised (It can, however, be safely assumed that Overstrand qualifies for a higher grading than the present one);
- the absence or shortage of social infrastructures e.g. primary and especially secondary schools, medical facilities, government institutions and sport & recreational facilities; and
- many suitably qualified graduates are either disinterested in becoming municipal employees or lack relevant experience.

Proposed strategy to address the problem

Overstrand Municipality is blessed with numerous residents who have a wealth of knowledge and excellent qualifications. Many of these residents settled in the municipal area in order to either retire or scale down on a former demanding career. Some of them are already playing leading roles in a large variety of community activities and, as a rule, are doing so on a voluntary basis with little or no pecuniary reward. These residents have a lot of so called ‘grey power’ - a reference to not only their grey hair but also their grey matter.

If this grey power could be harnessed it could in certain respects alleviate the shortage of scarce but in-demand skills. It is premised that in many instances they will be prepared to either volunteer their services (purely for achieving job satisfaction) or to offer their services at well below prevailing market rates. This will mainly be due to the fact that they don’t require a large income and also that they don’t have to maintain an expensive infrastructure in terms of offices, equipment and staff. If a data base of such skilled people who are willing to assist the Municipality in addressing its skills shortage could be compiled, it may result in a mutually beneficial relationship being established whereby the skills shortage could be alleviated at a relatively low cost whilst the service provider could supplement his/her income.

It is also possible that such a service provider could also act as a mentor for an inexperienced graduate interested in starting a municipal career. It is assumed that there will be a fair number of students from the Overstrand area who are studying at Universities and Technikons or similar educational / skills development institutions. Many of these students will have difficulty in finding work due to their lack of practical experience. Others would also welcome an opportunity to earn some pocket money to alleviate the financial burden imposed by their studies. It is possible that a symbiotic relationship could be created between local ‘grey power’ and students by matching experienced people with

young people who need mentorship and guidance while gaining practical work experience.

It is suggested that a data base of each group, namely 'grey power' residents and advanced students or recently graduated people, be established.

The following benefits could accrue:

- The Municipality obtains the services of skilled and experienced residents to supplement shortages at an affordable price.
- Students gain practical experience and are mentored into a real life workplace.
- A pool of young potential employees is established who may become interested in a Municipal career as they have now become exposed thereto. It may also be financially attractive in the sense that they could still live with their parents which could reduce the cost of living for both parent and child. Even if such a mentored student cannot (or does not want to) be employed by the Municipality, he/she at least has a CV with some practical experience.

There are two aspects that deserve attention. The first being that the 'grey power' providers should not detrimentally affect other full time professional people within the local economy. This can be achieved by limiting the hours of work, the remuneration per hour and also the obligation to mentor a student.

The second aspect relates to the cost involved. For reasons mentioned above the cost should not be exorbitant and value for money could be achieved as scarce skills are obtained at a reasonable cost. In respect of the students there are various possibilities of sourcing funds to compensate them. In any event the amount paid per day or per week should really only be to cover travel and other out of pocket expenses with a limited degree of personal financial gain.

Due to the ad hoc and temporary nature of the envisaged scheme it should be acceptable to organised labour. The scheme should nevertheless only be implemented after consultation with the local trade unions.

A further potential benefit could be that educational institutions could send their students to Overstrand for compulsory practical work. Special research projects could also be initiated eg socio-economic surveys and field work. In some cases they could provide assistance to communities eg a part time law clinic, a social support initiative, or as field workers for the recently instituted action to assist people to obtain a legal title to the properties they inhabit.

This matter will serve before the Local Labour Forum at its meeting to be held on 12 August 2008 and the recommendation of the Local Labour Forum will be conveyed during the Mayoral Committee meeting.

7. Financial Implications

Source of Funding: Operating Budget

8. Staff Implications

None

9. Comments from other Departments, Divisions and Administrations**Director : Infrastructure and Planning – (028 – 313 8104)**

This proposal is supported.

Head : Management Services – (028 – 313 8004)

This proposal is supported.

Manager : Accounting Services, BA King – (028 - 313 8154)

This proposal is supported. There is a need for “grey power” service providers. Certain challenges are encountered from time to time, where additional capacity is required to complete short term projects.

10. Annexures

None

RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL/AANBEVELING AAN DIE RAAD:

1. that the service provision / mentorship scheme as set out in the report be adopted;
2. that ‘grey power’ service providers and local students be invited to register on the Municipality’s database;
3. that each directorate fund its own appointed ‘grey power’ service providers at rates to be determined between the relevant director and the Municipal Manager;

4. that the support of potential sponsors to remunerate the students be solicited and failing which, the relevant directorate also remunerate the students;
 5. that the support of the two Municipal trade unions be canvassed through a consultation process;
 6. that quarterly progress reports be submitted to the Executive Mayor; and
 7. that the support and co-operation of educational institutions be solicited
1. *dat die diensverskaffing / mentorskapskema, soos in die verslag uiteengesit, aanvaar word;*
 2. *dat die 'gryskrag' diensverskaffers en plaaslike studente uitgenooi word om op die Munisipaliteit se databasis te registreer;*
 3. *dat elke direktoraat self hul aangestelde 'gryskrag' diensverskaffers befonds teen tariewe wat tussen die betrokke direkteur en die Munisipale Bestuurder bepaal word;*
 4. *dat die ondersteuning om studente te vergoed van potensiele borge aangevra word, of by gebrek daaraan, die betrokke direktoraat die studente vergoed;*
 5. *dat die ondersteuning van die twee munisipale vakunies deur 'n konsultasieproses verkry word;*
 6. *dat kwartaallikse vorderingsverslae aan die Uitvoerende Burgemeester voorgelê word; en*
 7. *dat die ondersteuning en samewerking van opvoedkundige instellings versoek word.*

4.8**ADDRESSING SKILLS SHORTAGES : A STRATEGIC APPROACH****(ITEM 5, PAGE 2 : MAYORAL COMMITTEE MEETING : 27 AUGUST 2008)****RESOLVED (UNANIMOUSLY)**

1. that the service provision/mentorship scheme as set out in the report **be adopted**;
2. that 'grey power' service providers and local students **be invited** to register on the Municipality's database;
3. that each directorate fund its own appointed 'grey power' service providers at rates to be determined between the relevant director and the Municipal Manager;
4. that the support of potential sponsors to remunerate the students **be solicited** and failing which, the relevant directorate also remunerate the students;
5. that quarterly progress reports **be submitted** to the Executive Mayor;
6. that the support and co-operation of educational institutions **be solicited**, and
7. that the recruitment and selection of students conform to Section 5 of the Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act 55 of 1998).