



SUBJECT: MEMORANDUM OF GRIEVANCE - ADDRESSING CRITICAL ISSUES AND THE ONGOING ENERGY CRISES IN GERMISTON

To: The Mayor of the City of Ekurhuleni, The MMC of Water, Sanitation and Energy, Ward Councillors of Germiston - Wards 35, 36, 39, and 92

Date : Friday, 11 August 2023

Where : Germiston Civic Centre

This Memorandum is delivered by the Primrose Rate Payers Association, LamDel Residents Association and Primrose Business forum for the attention of, respectively, Executive Mayor of Ekurhuleni Sivuyile Ngodwana, MMC Water, Sanitation and Energy Cllr Leshaka Manamela, Ward Cllr Wendy Morgan, Ward Cllr Kade Guerreiro, Ward Cllr Jean Ingram

Dear Sir/Madam,

We, the residents and businesses of Germiston from Wards 35, 36, 39, and 92, are addressing and delivering this memorandum to bring to your attention the persistent energy crises that have been plaguing our community and the inefficiencies of the council in addressing these critical issues.

We are deeply concerned about the poor service delivery, inadequate management, and lack of accountability from the City of Ekurhuleni and the Germiston Energy Depot, which has resulted in prolonged power outages and a decline in the quality of service provided.

All of the above directly affecting our community, and we believe:

- **No development can take place in these circumstances.**
- **No investment can be sustained in these conditions.**
- **No stable community life can take place in situations of permanent lack of services.**
- **No community member with disabilities or a need for critical care can live as they do not have the services to support them.**
- **No management is being applied which breeds an environment of no accountability**
- **No accurate load shedding schedules lead to loss of business and machines, appliances.**
- **Residents' financial and emotional well-being is being severely affected and brought to a breaking point**
- **Crime is increased and safety and security of residents and business are compromised**
- **The whole community is put at risk due political motivations and/or sabotage for gain for those in position of management at the electrical depot and in the City of Ekurhuleni.**

In addition to the points above, we want to highlight the following grievances.

1. Poor Service Delivery:

The Germiston Energy Depot has consistently failed to meet the basic service level agreements (SLAs) set for power restoration and maintenance. Frequent and prolonged power outages have become a common occurrence, causing significant disruptions to both residential and business activities. No SLAs are kept or met, and management is not held accountable for this.

2. Unavailability of Parts and Materials:

Technicians have been facing challenges in procuring necessary parts and materials, leading to delays in repairing infrastructure and restoring power. The lack of proper procurement and financial management to address this issue has only exacerbated the problem, often leading to technicians having to come up with makeshift solutions that often fails shortly after.

3. Shortage of Vehicles and tools:

The shortage of vehicles and tools available for dispatch has hindered the timely response to outages and technical faults. This shortage has resulted in prolonged downtime for power restoration.

4. Lack of PPE and Tools for Technicians:

The safety of technicians is compromised due to the unavailability of personal protective equipment (PPE) and proper tools, putting their well-being at risk while attempting repairs.

5. Ineffective Communication from the Energy Depot and Customer Services Department:

The Germiston Energy Depot has shown a lack of communication with the residents and businesses, failing to provide updates on ongoing issues and the progress of repairs. The call centre never has accurate information, and the customer service department phones are either not operational or not answered.

6. Poor Management and inadequate leadership of the Germiston Energy Depot:

The inefficiency in managing the Energy Depot has led to poor quality repairs and recurring failures. Political and other interference seems prevalent. The appointment of a manager from an outside area, unfamiliar with the Germiston energy network's complexities, has only added to the delays in service delivery and restoration efforts.

7. Delayed Fault Investigation and Resolution:

There have been long response times to investigate and resolve faults, taking days before dispatching a team to assess the cause of outages. As a result, minor incidents are deprioritized, leaving residents without power for extended periods.

8. Poor Overtime and Shift Planning:

The limited availability of overtime and poorly structured shift planning have hindered the ability of teams to restore power promptly, considering the high number of outages.

9. Lack of Accountability:

There has been a glaring lack of accountability within the executive of the City of Ekurhuleni and management of the Germiston Energy Depot. There are no clear performance measures, KPIs, or standards in place to hold management and staff accountable for their actions.

10. Security and Pre-emptive Measures:

The rampant theft and vandalism of energy infrastructure, including substations, mini substations, and cables, have contributed to the deterioration of the energy supply grid. The lack of effective security measures to deter theft and vandalism has made the situation worse.

11. Illegal Connections and Buildings:

The proliferation of illegal connections and buildings is compounding the energy collapse. The council's failure to address this issue has resulted in the growing burden on the energy supply grid.

12. Outdated and old infrastructure:

The Germiston area energy infrastructure is outdated and unmaintained. Without proper maintenance and timely upgrades, these infrastructure components have become increasingly unreliable, leading to breakdowns and further power outages. To blame the historical infrastructure which was not maintained or upgraded in 30 years is a way to misguide our residents. To say it was due to COVID-19 and the city has not been able to recover since is also a way to hide the real issue of mismanagement, corruption, sabotage, theft and non-delivery.

We, the residents and businesses of Germiston, have reached our breaking point and urgently call for a decisive turnaround in the energy situation.

We demand immediate action to address the ongoing crises and restore reliable energy services in our community as follows;

- 1. We demand that a thorough investigation is conducted into the inefficiencies of the Germiston Energy Depot's management and implement necessary changes to improve its functionality.**
- 2. We demand that an urgent action plan is implemented to improve service delivery, including the provision of necessary parts, tools, and PPE for technicians.**
- 3. We demand a fully resourced electrical team and to ensure parts, materials, vehicles and labour are available**
- 4. We demand a review and restructure of the shift and overtime policies and reinstatement of the standby team. Introduce proper shift planning and adequate overtime allowances to ensure that teams can effectively address ongoing power issues.**
- 5. We demand an electrical/operations team that is free of political motivations**
- 6. We demand that proper management be put in place that is free of threats and sabotage**
- 7. We demand solutions to the security and corruption crisis that plagues our electricity department, investigation and lifestyle audits to be implemented and charges to be made at SAPS for corruption, theft and sabotage.**
- 8. We demand that the city be held accountable for the long-term turnaround time, where the standard is 24 hours. Some residents have not had power for over 50 days.**
- 9. We demand solutions for the high number of electricity thefts due to illegal connections and a task team to strengthen security measures and to safeguard energy infrastructure and swiftly deal with illegal connections.**
- 10. We demand that the mayor take swift action against the substandard performance shown by his operations team, institute clear performance measures, KPIs, and standards to hold management and staff accountable for their actions and performance. The mayor must use the powers awarded to him by the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs to allow the power oversight committee to investigate and give their findings to him and to the public to further discipline these**

managers or operations staff, if any actions taken were not according to the code of conduct, we as the community, will want disciplinary action taken and charges to be made.

11. We demand proper maintenance practices, investments and operations.
12. We demand frequent services and maintenance to our sub stations.
13. We demand that our city be transparent with its issues and regularly provide feedback on our power systems
14. We demand transparency regarding the city's cashflow as the comments made by council suggests that there is none, we want the oversight committee to investigate and do a formal public report
15. We demand that the newly implemented memorandum where residents are charged for overhead cable thefts to be scrapped as residents cannot do the crime prevention the city is responsible for.
16. We demand implementation of an effective communication strategy and communication team, to ensure ongoing and transparent and truthful communication relating to outages and power restoration.
17. We, the undersigned, as the official and recognised associations representing residents and business in Germiston, demand to be recognised as stakeholders and attend the meetings to address issues affecting our community.
18. We, the undersigned, as the official and recognised associations representing residents and business in Germiston, demand to be recognised as stakeholders, to form part of the formation of a committee specifically appointed to monitor the service delivery of our electrical operations team and to attend the meetings to address issues affecting our community.

As per the Whip of council Jongizizwe Dlabathi, to quote "the depots are unable to provide services to residents and businesses *due to the issues that are being faced with capacity, materials, fleets issues and response times.*" Thereby admitting to the failure of the City to effectively manage and failing its residents.

And to quote furthermore " *The Germiston depot technicians are always the ones bear the brunt of the community's complaints, they do not have the proper equipment or PPE which directly impacts their delivery and response times! We will have a meeting together with all ward councillors and relevant stakeholders on how to assist this situation. Bearing in mind we don't have the money to address all the issues at once but share ideas on how we provide services to our residents.*"

In relation to the recent loadshedding fiasco. The city has commented on the recent Eskom take over, commenting that they have not load shed to save local jobs from not being lost, to relieve the industrial and local business pressure. We know this was not the case as the standby team have not been out to switch off or switch on. This still does not change the city's mandate to provide reliable power to the area, which it has not followed. Now that Eskom has returned the responsibility back to the city, they required industry to further sacrifice 30% of their current load even though they will be load shed and have back up power. Domestic residents only count 30% of the total load. There is no reason to why the city's power was taken over Eskom but for only mismanagement.

We say enough is enough! The Primrose Ratepayers Association, LamDel Residents Association and Primrose Business Forum have reached out to our City Manager and our Mayor's Office to be ignored.

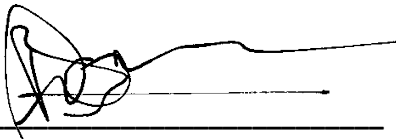
We cannot and will not be held to ransom any longer. We urge you to take immediate action in response to our grievances. The residents and businesses of Germiston has had enough, and they deserve reliable and

uninterrupted energy supply, a responsive local government, and a council that prioritises their well-being and safety.

We trust that you will take immediate action to address these pressing issues and restore the faith of the community in the council's ability to govern effectively. Failure to address this crisis promptly may have far-reaching consequences, not only for the reputation of the council but also for the overall social and economic well-being of Germiston.

We look forward to your urgent and comprehensive response to this matter within 14 days after the date of this memorandum and handover of it.

Sincerely,



DAVID-HUTCH BARR
PRA VICE CHAIRMAN
For: Primrose Rate Payers Association
vicechair@primroserpa.co.za
061 155 3748

JAKKIE JANSE VAN VUUREN
CHAIRPERSON LAMDEL RA
For: LamDel Residents Association
chair@lamdel.org.za
082 853 0204

Received by: In my official capacity to do so

Name: _____ **For:** _____ **Signature:** _____

Name: _____ **For:** _____ **Signature:** _____

Name: _____ **For:** _____ **Signature:** _____

Name: _____ **For:** _____ **Signature:** _____

Name: _____ **For:** _____ **Signature:** _____