An investigation of the challenges facing the ward committee system with specific reference to selected municipalities in the Province of the Eastern Cape

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this treatise is my own work and has not been submitted for degree purposes at any other university nor have I copied it from any other person’s academic work.

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Mr. Albert Mncedisi Ntlemeza

Date: April 2007
Dedication: This work is dedicated to my family especially my wife Lungie who kept on encouraging me even in difficult times and my children for their supportive work right through the time of study. Particular attention goes to Masande, Simnikiwe and Abulele who always showed their interest and willingness to help.
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Summary

Local government in South Africa has undergone radical changes since the first democratic local government elections were held in 1995 and 1996. It is generally known that local government in South Africa was based on racial fragmentation. The new South Africa therefore has to go beyond purely representative democracy to address the inequalities of the apartheid era.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996), envisages a complete transformation of the local government system. Subsequently, a policy framework has been developed to give effect to a new vision of local government. The White Paper on Local Government was passed in March 1998. It spells out the framework and programme in terms of which the existing local government system will be radically transformed. This culminated in the birth of the concept of developmental local government. Developmental local government establishes the basis of a system of local government which is centrally concerned with working with local citizens and ward communities in particular to find sustainable ways to meet their needs and improve the quality of their lives.

Developmental local government encourages public participation at the local level. One of the most powerful instruments by which the communities and groups become involved in local government affairs is through the ward committee structures and ward planning forums. The Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000), makes provision for community participation. Ward committees are established in terms of section 17 (1) of the Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998).

Ward committees play an important role in creating a democratic culture of local participation and accountability. They are the main mechanisms available to municipalities and communities to enhance public participation in
the local sphere of government. Their major obstacle is that their powers are limited to advising the communities and the relevant council.

The White Paper on Local Government provides for three approaches which can assist municipalities to be more developmental, namely integrated development planning and budgeting, performance management and working together with local citizens. Ward committees provide a link between the council and these processes.

The new system of local government also provides for the consideration of gender issues at the ward committee level. The local government policy framework requires that at least fifty percent of representation on ward committees should be women. The involvement of youth is also greatly encouraged. The system also provides for and clarifies the role/relationship with traditional leaders at the ward committee level. The local government legislative framework accepts and acknowledges the existence of traditional leaders. Their involvement in ward community activities and functions is well documented. Lastly, the capacity building of ward committees is posing a major challenge. In order for ward committee members to perform their functions effectively training must be provided. The respective local councils should be responsible for providing the necessary training to ward committees through the office of the speaker under which they fall. In the national sphere efforts are made to ensure that training for ward committees is provided.
CHAPTER ONE

Demarcation of the study on the challenges facing ward committees of Intsika Yethu and Engcobo Local Municipalities

1.1 Introduction

Globally, local government is the second level or third sphere of government which is deliberately created to bring government to the people. In this process it actually gives members of the community a greater sense of involvement in their local government affairs. In South Africa, the notion of public participation has manifested itself as a key concept that has been directed towards the shaping of a participatory democratic and developmental state. As a result of this, ward committees have become a powerful instrument for providing a link between the community and the relevant municipalities.

The main purpose of this study is to make an investigation into challenges facing the ward committee system in South African developmental local government with specific reference to Intsika Yethu and Engcobo local municipalities which are under the Chris Hani District Municipality in the Eastern Cape Province. The Intsika Yethu local municipality consists of 23 wards with 46 councillors, i.e. 23 ward councillors and 23 Proportional Representative [PR] councillors. In addition, it has 127 voting districts/villages. It is a new developmental municipality established from the merger of the former Tsomo and Cofimvaba municipalities that existed during the Transitional Local Government period which were part of the former Amatola and Western District Councils, respectively.
The Engcobo local municipality consists of 15 wards with 29 councillors, i.e. 15 ward councillors and 14 Proportional Representative [PR] councilors. It is smaller than the Intsika Yethu as it has 113 voting districts/villages (http://www.demarcation.org.za).

In dealing with this subject, the focus will be made to the theory and practice of participatory democracy. This will involve giving an outline of such principles as developmental local government, public participation, and the origin and nature of ward committees. The study will further focus on the tenets of public participation for ward committees, namely: integrated development planning (hereinafter, IDP); municipal budgets, and performance management, to count just a few.


Furthermore, the relationship between the ward committees and traditional leaders is briefly examined. Lastly, conclusions and recommendations are made and opportunities for further research are shared. In order to facilitate a clear order of discussion a logical framework of chapters forming the subject of study will be followed as outlined hereunder.
1.2 Delimitation of the study: developmental local government with specific reference to ward committees

According to Craythorne (1997:13) local government is multidimensional in that it does not exist only as a legal entity; it exists in and for communities at grassroots level closest to the communities. As such, local government operates in a number of dimensions and exists as a living and dynamic organism. Local government is that level of government which is commonly defined as a decentralised, representative institution with general and specific powers devolved to it by [a] higher sphere[s] of government (national or provincial) with a geographically defined area. It is also defined as a political subdivision of a nation or (in a federal system) state, which is constituted by law and has substantial control of local affairs, including the powers to impose taxes or to exact labour for prescribed purposes. The governing body of such an entity is elected or otherwise locally selected (Ismail et al., 1997:2).

In South Africa, local government is one of the three spheres of government deliberately created to bring government closer to the people, as well as giving communities a sense of involvement in the political and governance processes that control their daily lives. The need for effective democratic local government as a vehicle for development and national integration is imperative (Reddy, 1996:3).

It was the White Paper on Local Government released in March 1998 which set up in more detail the central government’s vision of developmental local government. Fundamentally the White Paper on Local Government, 1998, defines developmental local government as “local government committed to working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of their lives”.

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The White Paper on Local Government, 1998, is not specific on ward committees but puts an emphasis on local communities. For example, part of the developmental role of local government identified by the White Paper is to build participative democracy, and encourage community development. Since local government is the most direct interface between the government and the community, it should be the best location for the development of a grassroots, participative, deep-rooted democracy (www.cosatu.org.za).

Section 1 of the Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998) provides for five different systems of municipal governance which consist of three executive systems, and two participatory systems. The former consist of the following: (1) the mayoral executive system; (2) the collective executive system; and (3) the plenary executive system. The latter is made up of the ward participatory and the sub council participatory systems of municipal governance. Central to this study is the ward participatory system which provides for the establishment of ward committees to facilitate community participation in matters of local government (Ababio and Makgoba, 2002:4).

The study attracted some interest because ward committees are regarded as one of the main mechanisms available to municipalities and communities to enhance public participation in [the local sphere of] government. However, the concern is that ward committees face major challenges as their powers are limited to only advising the communities and the relevant council (http://www.idasa.org.za). The argument is that the roles of ward committees should be revisited. Currently, ward committees lack clear and coherent strategic direction. They often lack information and understanding of their work. Ward councillors in many areas are not leading, directing or, in some areas, not even attending ward committees (http://www.idasa.org.za). Sometimes there is no consultation with communities on matters affecting them. It is important therefore that more powers be given to these structures in order to enhance their capacity and encourage accountability and responsibility.
The Constitution (section 152) provides for the establishment of representative and participatory democracy as two objectives of local government. Through regular elections councillors are elected both in wards and in party lists to represent the residents of the municipality (www.communitylawcentre.org.za). The most important way that communities can participate in local government is through the structure of ward committees. A ward committee is meant to be an institutionalized channel of communication and interaction between communities and municipalities. The municipalities are required by the Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998), to formulate and implement the processes and procedures to establish ward committees by enacting a municipal by-law (http://www.idasa.org.za).

According to section 72 (3) of the Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998), the object of ward committees is to enhance participatory democracy in local government. The aim is to give residents a more direct voice in the governance processes of their neighborhoods as a means to an end for local communities to make their views and needs known to the municipal council. In terms of the above mentioned section a ward committee consists of (a) the councillor representing that ward in the council, who must also be the chairperson of the committee, and (b) not more than ten other persons. It is up to each municipality to decide how many members from one to ten its ward committees will consist of (Ababio and Makgoba, 2002:11).

The ward committees cannot be regarded as a one stop shop for community participation. They cannot replace the responsibility of the ward councillor to consult the community and local organizations. They are expected to subscribe to all principles of democracy. They should be the instruments that complement the overall democratic order of the community. Members of the ward committees should not necessarily be under any political party affiliation (SANCO, 2004:4).

It is important also to have a brief background for the concept of developmental local government. After 1994, local government in South Africa was confronted with the serious challenge of how to deal with the legacy of
apartheid, the extreme levels of poverty and the widening gap between the rich and the poor. Many of the challenges facing municipalities had, and have, major financial implications for local government (http://www.cosatu.org.za).

In terms of section 9 of the Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998), both Intsika Yethu and Engcobo local municipalities are category B municipalities with a plenary executive type of municipality. In terms of section 155 (1) of Chapter 7 of the Constitution the difference between a category B and C municipalities is that a category B municipality shares municipal executive and legislative authority in its area with a category C municipality within whose area it falls, while a category C municipality has municipal executive and legislative authority in an area that excludes more than one municipality. There are eight (8) local municipalities affiliated under the Chris Hani District Municipality, namely, Inxuba Yethemba, Tsolwana, Inkwanca, Lukanji, Intsika Yethu, Emalahleni, Engcobo, and Sakhisizwe.

The two local municipalities have been chosen because they are considered to be among the biggest as well as because their rural settings are almost the same as the other local municipalities. Therefore, a sample from them will make wider sense. Moreover, the two municipalities formed part of the former Transkei homeland and had inherited poor service delivery. These areas are underdeveloped with clear signs of poverty and unemployment. They have poor infrastructure. The capacity of the ward committees towards the developmental aspects in these local government areas therefore needs the attention.

In the context of vast social, economic and political inequalities, high levels of poverty, increasing unemployment, skewed access to resources, and fragmented communities, the Constitution envisaged a developmental role for local government as a way of approaching these challenges.
1.3 Statement of the problem

The purpose of the study is to investigate the extent of the challenges that are faced by ward committees in effectively and efficiently carrying out their mandates of making recommendations to the municipal council on the needs derived from the communities, as well as being the channel of communication between the council and the communities. Do the ward committee structures within the defined rural/local municipalities have powers to influence the decisions of the local council on matters affecting the service delivery needs of the communities?

Put in simple terms, and in an attempt to unpack (own source) the meaning of the notion of the ‘power to influence’ it is important to elaborate as follows: This means that municipal councils must be accountable to their local communities. In addition, the Constitution says it is important that communities participate in local government. The most important way that communities can participate in local government is through the structure of the ward committee (http://www.paralegaladvice.org.za).

There are different ways that individuals can participate in local government. The following are some of the ways: The first way is through direct advice and support. Councillors are the most direct means of access people have to local government. Usually people will turn to a councillor for direct advice and support. Once a problem has been referred to a councillor, the person should demand to know what the councillor is doing or has done to deal with the problem (Ibid). The second way is by attending of public meetings called by the councillor. Attending a ward committee or council is another way of participating in local government on matters such as the formulation of budgets, IDP, and programmes (Ibid). Thirdly, community members are allowed to attend the municipal committees that are established to discuss issues that concern governance, local socio-economic development and service delivery matters.
Lastly, the use of ward committees forms the main focus in explaining the notion of ‘the power to influence’ the decisions of the local council on matters affecting service delivery. Ward committees play an important role in creating a democratic culture of local participation and accountability. Ward committees and their members can participate in local government in the following ways:

(a) Assessing and approving the budget
(b) Planning and developing the integrated development plan.
(c) In the planning and implementation of municipal service partnerships. In this context, ward committees and the community can play an important role as follows:

- Helping the municipality to decide on which services are to be developed and improved and insisting that council consult citizens during decision making
- Communities should work with NGOs, CBOs and political parties to develop proposals for council to consider
- Communities can ask council to appoint a committee of community representatives to monitor processes and to advise the municipality on priorities for service development
- Communities or their representatives can evaluate future service providers and monitor the performance of those providing services

(d) Monitoring council activities on a regular basis.
Ward committees should insist on regular reports and feedback on municipal projects and services, either at ward committee meetings or public hearings. If necessary they should make constructive suggestions for improvement and if necessary organize the community to help get the job done.

(e) Monitor annual performance
Council should prepare a report for the ward committee at least once a year that shows how it has performed in relation to their objectives and the budget. This usually happens at the end of the financial year. The report and the audited financial statements must be made available to the public.
The study concerns two different questions. The first question is about public participation in local government affairs through ward committees, that is to say, an inquiry will be made into the effectiveness and efficiency of ward committees in making participatory democracy effective. The second question concerns the sub problem, which is formed by the challenges facing ward committees which can be grouped together in four central themes as mentioned in paragraph one of the proposal. Other problems which are related to the main problem will encompass the relationship between ward committees, (ward) councillors and the councils.

The challenge regarding the participation of women and the youth, as well as the relationship between traditional leaders and the ward committees and their involvement in the local government affairs will also be part of the other problems related to the main problem. A major problem related to the main problem is the budgetary constraint faced by ward committees. Do they have access to funds and if yes how?

In addition, lack of capacity by ward committees is considered as one of the important challenges. The majority of members of ward committees in the two local municipalities that form the base of this study are illiterate. They lack skills and knowledge to efficiently and effectively manage the affairs of ward committees. The argument is that for them to shoulder the councils’ responsibilities is a mammoth task.

Ward committees are not faced alone by this challenge, ward councillors are also faced by it as well. It is argued that ward committee members and ward councillors as chairpersons need to be provided with capacity support by the council. The White Paper on Local Government, 1998, is in support of the above statement as it provides for the empowering of ward councillors as community leaders who should play a pivotal role in building a shared vision and mobilizing community resources for development.

The other area of concern involves the budgetary constraints faced by ward committees. The ward committees have no access to the budget, let alone
giving inputs during the budget process. The great concern that should be raised is that ward committees must be given the powers and responsibilities to manage and administer their budgets. If the answer can be yes, then capacity building for ward committees/members should be extended to cover this area as well. Ward committees are faced with critical financial constraints. This is also echoed by the RDP document where it is stated that local government is faced with critical financial problems and will have to find new financing strategies with the provincial and national government, with due regard to section 158 of the Constitution.

Local authorities must make sufficient resources available for the extension and upgrading of municipal services, and for capacity building to permit community-based structures to assist in local planning and implementation of the upgrading (White Paper on Reconstruction and Development, 1994:19). Local government will need additional sources of revenue for operating, maintenance and subsidy expenses, as well as staff re-training and some new capital expenditure.

In order to attempt to solve these problems use will be made of the quantitative research method which will be elaborated upon in the section on Research Methodology. It is also worth mentioning that, according to the information at one’s disposal, no other person represented in the scientific literature has talked about this problem as outlined in the study. Even the National Conference on Ward Committees held on 24 and 25 June 2003 at Gallagher Estate, Gauteng, aimed at, providing a review of the progress with the establishment of the ward committees, as well as to reflecting on the challenges experienced on the ground (National Conference on Ward Committees, 2003:1).

1.4 Statement of the hypothesis

Ward committee members are considered as ‘arms and legs’ of the municipality, and ‘catalysts to bridge the binary divide between the
communities and the municipalities’ (http://www.paralegaladvice.org.za). The assumption is if they participate effectively in municipal affairs the socio-economic conditions of the people and the governance of the municipality will be effectively improved.

The handbook for public participation in local governance produced by the Australia-South African Local Government Partnership (ASALGP), “Get involved with us”, put forward what it terms the ‘benefit for public participation’. Benefits of public participation include:

- They encourages citizen–focused service delivery because the municipality has responded to stated community need;
- They develop a clear sense of direction for communities as the process of community consultation can help clarify and focus the community’s issues;
- They make the most of a whole range of resources in the community; a municipality will be unaware of the skills hidden in the community (such as local expertise and knowledge) if they never talk to community members;
- They add value to municipality’s decision-making by drawing on these skills and the wisdom of the community members;
- They identifies alternatives to be considered when addressing issues-consulting and including a range of people will ensure a range of alternative views;
- They improve municipal credibility with the public if the municipality takes the community’s opinions into account in their work;
- They create a better understanding of a project and its objectives as the municipality has informed the community and invited them to be involved; and
- They enhance community ownership of decisions and resultant outcomes if the community has been part of the decision-making process. In summary, this means that better decisions are made by municipalities (http://www.asalgp.co.za).
Effective participation could be made possible by getting rid of all the challenges or problems faced by ward committees [see above]. The view is that municipalities of Intsika Yethu and Engcobo must develop strategies aimed at bringing efficiency in participation of ward committees in their systems of governance. For example, the setting up of councillor clinics. These are merely ad hoc meetings (meetings that are called specifically to deal with a particular issue that has come up which needs the urgent attention of the community) where the ward councillor shares information with the community members.

Councillors should be requested to have regular meetings on specific days at certain places in the community. This means the councillor must be available to see anyone from the community at these agreed times. The dates should be advertised in the local print media and SABC radio station both in English and the preferred indigenous language commonly used by local inhabitants of these two local municipalities e.g. Xhosa (http://www.paralegaladvice.org.za).

A second consideration is how participation should be done through lobbying. Lobbying means persuading someone with decision making powers to support a position one believes is right. A person or group of people can lobby a person in power to try and influence them in the decision making process. Lobbying is mainly used by organisations to persuade politicians to support their position on a particular issue. Councillors can use lobbying to try to persuade committees, the mayor and other people in government to make their respective community needs as priority. Various lobbying methods can be used such as making submissions to committees or chairpersons of committees, phoning or writing to individual decision-makers, meeting decision-makers or inviting them to meet people in the community, as well as asking other influential people in positions of power to talk to the decision maker informally(http://www.paralegaladvice.org.za).

A third consideration is how participation should take place through the use of the media. For example, an individual member of the community can
approach a local newspaper or community radio station and ask them to write or present a story on an issue that concerns the community. What role the municipal council should play in dealing with the issue will be explained in such a presentation (Ibid).

The study will focus on the challenges faced by ward committees grouped into the four central themes as mentioned in the introduction. By definition, ward committees are one of the tools available to municipalities and communities to enhance public participation at local level. Ward committees are an institutionalised channel of communication and interaction between communities and municipalities (www.idasa.org.za).

Ward committees are the communication vehicles as established in terms of section 73 (1) of the Municipal Structures Act, 1998, Act 117 of 1998, between communities and local councils. It is worth mentioning that the main objective of ward committees is to bring government closer to the people. There had to be an intervening structure that could articulate the interests of communities in order for it to be presented to the municipality.

The process of establishing a ward committee does not rely on a majority, it should reflect the diversity of interests in the ward. The spirit is to create a body that will empower people to be part of decision-making (National Conference on Ward Committees, 2003:4).

1.4.1 Statement of the sub hypothesis

Public participation and accountability are meaningless if people do not have access to information which enables them to make better decisions. It is assumed that access to information by the local community would promote transparency and openness; and cooperation of the participant in the study. The public disclosure of all information pertaining to any policy, decision or activity for which any local municipality is responsible should be guaranteed.
In particular, meetings of the local council and the ward committees should be open to the public (http://www.anc.org.za).

If ward committees are serving as the communication vehicle between communities and the local council, what action does the council take when the ward committees are unable to deliver services as expected? In other words can the council have a direct relationship with the communities to address such a shortfall? Section 21 of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000, makes provision for communications to the local community. Subsection (1) provides that the municipality must notify or publicise the information through the media as follows:

- in the local newspaper or newspapers of its area;
- in a newspaper or newspapers circulating in its area and determined by the council as the newspaper of record; and
- by means of radio broadcasts covering the area of the municipality.

Of note is that such notification must be in the official languages determined by the council, having regard to language preferences and usage within its area. The view is that the ward committee is considered as an appropriate channel through which communities may lodge their complaints. This would represent a forum for communication between the ward councillor and the ward community about municipal affairs and the development and service options (National Conference on Ward Committees, 2003:13).

The question that needs to be asked is whether the local community does have access to such information?

The local government through ward committees must unlock the potential and creative energies of the people and bring the government closer to the people through local government and community structures. In general, local authorities are key institutions for delivering basic services, extending local control, managing local economic development, and redistributing local public resources.
The following section will look at the methodology that was applied to conduct research for the study.

1.5 Research methodology

Research methodology is best explained in the words of Mouton and Marais (1991:15). “While the epistemological dimension refers to the status of scientific statements, the methodological dimension concerns what may be called the how of social sciences research? In other words how should research be planned, structured and executed to comply with the criteria of science? In actual fact, the etymological meaning of the word methodology could be interpreted as the logic of implementing the scientific methods in the study of reality”.

This definition becomes clearer when one bears in mind that the process of scientific research is largely a type of decision making process. The researcher is required to make a series of decisions.

According to Babbie (1998:18) science offers a special approach to the discovery of reality through personal experience. It offers a special approach to the business of enquiry. While epistemology is the science of knowing, methodology is the science of finding out, and how social scientists find out about human social life.

In planning an investigation the researcher must make a series of decisions about how the research questions can best be answered by the investigation. The researcher must find a compromise between the ideas of good research and the numerous practical constraints that present themselves in real life research settings (Terreblanche and Durrheim, 1999:3).

Learning which questions to ask and which tools to use is essentially the business of research methods. A research method relates to the study of ways of understanding the world. It is an absolute essential set of skills,
insights, and tools needed to answer intelligently any but the simplest question. Without such skills, insights and tools one can be a foolish consumer, a misinformed voter, a poorer student than need be. It is the job of the well-informed researcher to reveal the order in the chaos we call the world. It is the job of the research methods to facilitate such a revelation of order (Singleton, 1988:3).

The purpose of research methodology is to understand the world around us. According to Singleton (1988:4) beyond providing a foundation of knowledge for those who do go on to become social scientists, the study of research methods may provide more immediate and useful information than any other single course of study. Knowledge of methods can benefit one as both a consumer and producer of research evidence (Singleton, 1988:4). Thus, according to Leedy (1993:139) all research methodologies rest upon a bedrock axiom. The nature of the data and the problem for research dictate the research methodology. If the data are verbal, the methodology is qualitative, if they are numerical, the methodology is quantitative.

1.5.1 Quantitative research

The investigation will be conducted by employing a quantitative research method to obtain data using a range of methods which use measurements to record and investigate aspects of social reality (Bless and Higson-Smith 2000:156). The quantitative research method is chosen against many others because it is believed to be the best, or the most appropriate method of measuring the properties of phenomena (e.g. the attitudes of individuals towards certain topics).

Quantitative measurement is about assigning numbers to the perceived qualities of things (Babbie and Mouton 2003:49). This methodology is applied by relying upon measurement and uses various scales and numbers from a coding system by which different cases and different variables may be
compared. Systematic changes in scores are interpreted or given meaning in terms of the actual world that they represent. Numbers have the advantage of being exact.

For example, three means exactly the same thing to every human being who knows the concept, and will mean exactly the same thing in different social, cultural and linguistic contexts. Another advantage of numbers is that they can be analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics (Bless and Higson-Smith 2000:38). The quantitative research method was chosen because it is concerned with measurement using numbers that are capable of being analysed in a controlled manner according to criteria identified in advance. This is to say that quantitative research is concerned with measurable variables and it is furthermore also susceptible to statistical analysis (www.disssertationsuccess.com).

1.5.2 Data collection methods

During the investigation the use of questionnaires and structured interviews will be the main techniques that will be employed to collect data, since they are the most common quantitative research methods. Data collection involves applying the measurement to the sample or cases selected for the investigation (Mouton, 1996:67).

1.5.2.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires are the most common marketing research method. They are used for structured interviews, written surveys, email and internet surveys (www.statpac.com). Questionnaires are an inexpensive way of gathering data from a potentially large number of respondents. Often they are the only feasible way to reach a number of reviewers large enough to allow statistical analysis of the results. A well-designed questionnaire that is used effectively to gather information on both the overall performance of the test system as well as information on specific components of the system will be used. If the questionnaire includes demographic questions on the participants, they can
be used to correlate performance and satisfaction with the test system among different group of users (www.gatech.edu).

1.5.2.2 Structured interview

Sometimes referred to as a patterned interview, this type of interview is very straightforward. The interviewer has a standard set of questions that are asked of all candidates. This makes it easier for the interviewer to evaluate and compare respondents (www.candocareer.com).

1.6 Dissemination of research results

The research results will be disseminated through the municipal managers of the two selected local municipalities, and to ward committees of the two local municipalities on request. Two hard copies will be submitted to the supervisor, and the library of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. A second copy of the treatise will be on CD rom and made available to the library. Research papers will be read with the supervisor at national conferences, and at least one paper will be submitted for publication in an accredited journal.

The following chapter will focus on the main theory and practice of the study. Discussions will centre on the principles of participatory democracy in developmental local government, and the origin nature and role of ward committees. Consideration will also be given to the tenets of public participation of ward committees in local governance by focusing the discussion on integrated development planning, the legislative framework, reconstruction and development programme, government employment and redistribution policy, the municipal budget, performance management, gender mainstreaming, and the relationship between ward committee members and traditional leaders.
CHAPTER TWO

Theoretical and legislative framework for participatory democracy in the sphere of local government

2.1 Introduction

In order to be able to investigate the challenges to the ward committee system of the developmental local municipalities with specific reference to the selected local municipalities of Intsika Yethu and Engcobo under the Chris Hani District Municipality in the Eastern Cape Province, it is imperative, first of all, to consider the principle of participatory democracy.

It will also be necessary at the beginning of this section to briefly discuss the concept of developmental local government. Then, more attention will be given to the notion of public participation as the cornerstone of democracy. The focus will be made to the theory and practice of participatory democracy.

This will involve giving an outline of such principles as developmental local government, public participation, and the origin and nature of ward committees. The study will further focus on the tenets of public participation for ward committees, namely: IDP; municipal budgets, and performance management, to mention just a few. Following is a brief discussion on the policy framework for developmental local government which will, inter alia, focus on the: RDP; Gear; the Constitution; White Paper on Local Government, 1998; Municipal System Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000); and Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998).
2.2 Participatory democracy in developmental local government

The concept of a developmental local government is a fairly new, South African creation. The elements of urban management have served as a guiding light in the efforts to uncover the position and duties of local government. For example, the urban management element of focusing on governance, with its emphasis on increasing the capacities of municipalities and clearly demarcating their roles vis-à-vis other actors in development (from the central government to grassroots communities), is especially relevant to a developmental local government. Pursuing this concept necessitates that local institutions are strengthened and enlightened (Rakosa, 1988: 47-48). The launch of the Local Government White Paper in March 1998 provides a blueprint for the final form of local government in South Africa after its progression from apartheid structures, through the democratisation of councils, to the creation of developmental local government.

According to the White Paper, local government will centre on municipalities which will coordinate all developmental activities at national, provincial and local level, from private and public sectors (Pycroft, 1996:151). Developmental local government has to play a role in representing communities, protecting human rights, and meeting basic needs (Van Niekerk, 2001:65). This means that local government is not just an important site for the delivery of services, but it is crucial for the economic and social development of people. By working effectively with the other two spheres of government, and a range of public and civil society organisations and the private sector, local government also has to contribute to economic growth, job creation and social development (Carrim, 2001:112; Parnell and Pieterse, 1999:61); Urban Sector Network,1998 in Rakosa, 1988:1).

According to Reddy (1999:209), there are four characteristics that make local government developmental, namely: (i) exercising municipal powers and functions in a manner that maximises their impact on social development and
economic growth; (ii) playing an integrating and coordinating role to ensure alignment between public (including all spheres of government) and private investment within the municipal area; (iii) democratising development; and (iv) building social capital through providing community leadership and vision and seeking to empower marginalised and excluded groups within the community. In addition, local government has to focus on realizing development outcomes such as, *inter alia*, the provision of household infrastructure and services; the creation of liveable, integrated cities, towns and rural areas; and the promotion of local economic development and community empowerment and redistribution (ibid).

The focus of participatory democracy is on people’s direct involvement in the decision making process. A great merit of democracy is to secure the consent of the governed. But this consent will not be secured if it is felt that the governors are remote, unknowing and uncaring (Richards, 1983:175-176). Christenson et al, (1971:194 in Ismail et al, 1997:28) write the following characteristics of participatory democracy, namely:

- “It regards citizens as highly motivated politically, and believes that they will participate fully and continuously in public life;
- “citizens will have access to adequate political information and will use it for enlightened political decision making;
- “citizens are able to communicate their political views to others and debate them effectively;
- “government is accessible to all citizens. This entails procedures such as rotation of offices among members of the community, the multiplication of elected offices, short terms of office, popular initiatives in proposing new measures to government, frequent referendums on issues and thorough popular discussion on all or most government matters; and
- “formal procedures must be played down in favour of popular enthusiasm”.

According to Sabela and Reddy in (Reddy, 1996:4-5), government requires the consent of the citizens whose rights it is bound to respect and protect. The dignity of a man is best manifested when s/he determines and controls his or her affairs. Responsibility for the governing of one’s own conduct develops one’s dignity. Public participation contributes to the creation of community solidarity, and citizens feel involved in matters relevant to their welfare.

Public participation occurs when citizens are invited and expected to express their wishes on issues of governance. On every issue, the views of the majority should prevail (Mastenbroek and Steytler, 1997:242). Formulation of a by-law a municipality’s legislative instrument may be passed by a municipal council and members of the public will be asked to make submissions (ibid).

According to Carrim (2001:113) a municipality “must develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative governance”. Residents have the right to contribute to the municipality’s decision making processes. They also have the right to submit recommendations and complaints to the council and are entitled to prompt responses to these. They have the right to “regular disclosure of the state of affairs of the municipality, including its finances” (ibid). Oldfield and Parnell (1998:9) write that the “democratisation of local government means that you get a chance to say what’s important to you, for instance how your service charges, rates and taxes should be spent…”

Developmental local government is about people not just services only. It is the potential interface between government as a whole and local communities. It can help communities to determine their basic needs and set priorities, and can provide a platform for participation and representation, community education and enhanced accountability (Local Government Digest, 1996:6). Bearing this in mind, the following section will focus on public participation.

According to Bekker (1996:134), public participation in the context of developmental local government, is a wide concept, which includes citizens’
and community participation. The author further states that the word “public” in public participation refers to all the people whether or not they possess the rights and obligations of citizenship.

In this treatise the terms ‘public’, ‘community’ and ‘citizen’ participation will be used interchangeably, as is commonly done in South Africa, and around the world (http://www.asalgp.co.za). Municipalities require active participation by citizens at four levels:

- ‘as voters: to ensure maximum democratic accountability of the elected political leadership for the policies they are empowered to promote;
- as citizens: who express, via different stakeholder associations, their views before, during and after the policy development process in order to ensure that policies reflect community preferences as far as possible;
- as consumers and end users, who expect value for money, affordable services, and courteous and responsive service; and
- as organised partners involved in the mobilization of resources for development via for-profit businesses, non-governmental organizations and community-based institutions’ (Parnell et al, 2002: 14-16).

Public policy designed to deliver developmental local government proposes an ongoing relationship of cooperation between state and civil society. Local residents are expected to participate in this relationship through the vote (as individuals), through organised pressure on their municipality to express preferences and complaints (as members of stakeholder associations), through expression of dissatisfaction over service delivery (as consumers), and through public–private partnerships aimed at development (as business, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and (CBOs) (Bekker and Leide, 2003:147-148).

According to Craythorne (1997:97), it is appropriate to follow on, after policy, with the issue of public participation and consultation, as a means of reducing autocratic behaviour and involving the people in government so as to direct
governmental efforts at the real needs of society. Sabela and Reddy (1996), in Reddy 1996:5), state that “public or popular participation in decision making is an imperative tenet for democratic local government. In order not to deny the minority its right of self-assertion, it is also a democratic imperative that while the majority should have its way, the minority must have its say. In return, the minority must accept the majority decision once that decision has been freely arrived at. To participate effectively must mean to be able, as a consequence of the participation, to have some influence over any resultant decisions (Derbyshire, 1984 in Reddy, 1996:5).

Van der Waldt and Knipe (2001:141-142), refer to community participation as an active process in which the clients, or those who will benefit, influence the direction and implementation of a development project aimed at improving the welfare of people in terms of income, personal growth, independence and other values regarded as valuable. This means that the community should become actively involved by using its own initiatives in implementing development activities.

Community participation is therefore much more comprehensive than simply helping a project, for example, through labour. It also involves the empowerment of the community. Empowerment means that people’s skills are improved so that they can become more effectively involved in the development process. It also means that the community can make its own decisions and take action as regards its own needs and conditions.

The community itself knows best what the prevailing conditions are and what problems are being experienced and it therefore knows best how to address these circumstances and/or problems. These authors go on to say that participation in the development process must allow the members of the community to use their own views and convictions to address the specific conditions and/or problems prevailing in the community. In addition participation must be acknowledged as a voluntary process that can make a definite contribution to converting or developing the community (Van der Waldt and Knipe, 2001:142).
In terms of a handbook for public participation in local governance ‘Get involved with us’ the basic assumptions underlying public participation include the following:

- ‘Participation is a fundamental right of all people;
- decisions made by people on their own behalf will often be better than those made for them by other people, because people know what they need in their lives;
- skills learned through participation can be extended to other aspects of participants’ lives, for example, the experience of participation often leads to a general increase in personal confidence and development’ (http://www.asalgp.co.za).

Sherry Arnstein (in 1969) developed a ladder of eight (8) possible levels of public participation, where one can choose to step from one rung to the next. That is to say, from minimal public participation, to actual handing over of power to the community for making the decision. Arnstein’s ladder of citizen participation ranges from citizen control, delegated power, partnership, placation and consultation, informing, therapy and as well as manipulation (http://www.asalgp.co.za).

Rakosa (1999:23) agrees that the value of this process can be assessed by who participates, how and when they participate. Hence, authorities will need to operate in a more pluralistic way than in the past, alongside a wide variety of public, private and voluntary agencies. Effective participation therefore presents a challenge to local government to involve people at the stage of policy initiation and formulation and not just at the final stages of development.

It is argued that development must embrace democracy and conversely as well. A combination of the two processes would make contemporary local government a democratic developer, in essence meaning that it should be both accountable and decentralized (that is, prepared to share power). This is
so that maximum synergy between role-players at the local level can be captured (Urban Sector Network, 1998 in Rakosa, 1988 :1).

Participation should not be seen as a blanket solution for all development issues or problems. It is a political practice that fosters access to relevant information, influence over the allocation of scarce resources, awareness about the benefits of collective actions in terms of strengthening livelihood strategies and increasing social capital, and citizenship (Parnell et al, 2002:12-13). According to Pimstone et al (1998:128), public participation in local government and development is also influenced by the historical and current dynamics of the social, political and economic context in which local government seeks to operate. These dynamics must be acknowledged by local authorities in their formulation and implementation of development policies and their intentions to foster public participation.

According to Bekker (1996:134), participation in the planning process is considered to be important. It is a means of obtaining information about local conditions, needs, desires and attitudes. This information may be important to achieve informed and implementable decisions in the planning process (Bryson 1993:3 in Bekker 1996:134). Participation is a means of involving and educating the public. The benefit of involvement is that people are more likely to be committed to a project or a programme if they are involved in its planning and preparation. They can identify with it and even see it as their project (Canyars 1982:102 in Bekker 1996:134). The benefit of education is the enhancement of the quality of citizenship in that the educated citizen is enabled to exercise judgment and contribute to the debate about policy, and is also aware of societal problems and the difficulties of finding solutions to them (Boaden et al 1982:167) in Bekker 1996:135).

- The needs of the public must be put first and service delivery systems must be better, faster and more responsive to the needs of the citizens. A practical way to achieve this has been provided by the Batho Pele principles which inter alia looked at service standards, providing more and better information, increasing openness and transparency,
remedying mistakes and failures, and getting the best value for money (White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997:16-22). One of the principles that is also dealt with is to ensure that “all citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are entitled” (Administratio Publica, 2002:43). The first question that should come to mind is how to achieve this and the answer lies within the principle of public participation.

According to an article written by Kroukamp (in Administratio Publica, 2002:50-51), the participation of citizens in the government activities should always be well organised. Endeavours to establish sound relationships between the various participants should be preceded by negotiations to determine the rules that are to be followed in the process of participation. Emrich (in Mathur 1986:21 in Administratio Publica, 2002:50-51) suggests the following six rules when participation takes place:

- “participation must begin at the lowest level within the community. People at the grassroots level must be aware of the opportunities to participate and they must understand what the advantages of such participation are.

- participation must take place at all the stages of a particular project. From the earliest pre-preparing exercises, to the development of plans, the design of a mechanism for the implementation and the final stage of implementation, participants from the community must be taken on board.

- participation is much more than casting a vote or some isolated activity. It requires from the concerned community members to ‘get right into the middle of the fight’, to care about matters of concern and not to allow others to take all the decisions.

- participative processes must deal with the allocation and control of goods and services needed to achieve the goals.

- participation must deal with the existing loyalties. It should not focus exclusively on the strengthening of leadership.
• participants must be cautioned about the possibility of conflict in some form. In communities where citizens participate in activities of government, decisions may favour one group at the expense of another. All the participants involved and not only the government institution must deal with the conflict that flows from that situation”

While there are advantages to public participation, there are also limits to such participation. For example, a public participation programme cannot always:
• overcome all opposition from the community, as the municipality may, in the end, make a decision which they think is the best for the majority of the community, but not everyone will agree
• resolve all differences of opinion because community opinions may vary widely about one particular issue; one cannot always please all the people all the time
• replace planning or regulatory processes that examine the technical aspects of projects; there are some decisions the municipality must make which are purely technical – for example planning regulations must be followed whether or not some people in the community agree with them.

2.2.1 The origin and nature of ward committees

Attempts to trace the origin of the concept of ward committees in the South African context have not been quite successful. In particular, it has been difficult to find a country in which the model of ward committees is based. An extract from the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) report, 2003, on “Reviewing the Establishment and Operation of Municipal Ward Committees in South Africa” seems to share the same sentiments and it reads:

“People around the world are always thinking of new and better ways to build communities. Local government leaders need to know about these changes and factor these into their policies. International examples of participatory
planning were found in Brazil, but not specifically of ward committees. The exceptions were New Zealand and Canada but due to the advanced systems of local government in those countries were not deemed relevant to this study."

An appropriate and precise background on ward committees in South Africa is believed to be a concept conceptualized by the ANC. “The ANC believes that all legislative and executive power at the local level must be constitutionally vested in democratically elected structures. In order to deepen democracy and ensure grassroots participation in the organs of government, the ANC believes that all organs of civil society, such as civic/residents associations, trade unions, traditional leaders, business organisations, religious groups, and other interest groups, need to be given scope to influence the process of government.”

This can be achieved firstly by creating advisory and consultative mechanisms such as:

- People’s assemblies to debate issues of major significance to that town, city or rural area;
- Local government subcommittees with outside representation consult on specific policy issues “ (Heydenrich, 2004:2).

The origin of ward committees can be traced from the provisions of the White Paper on Local Government, 1998, which was released in March 1998. In the White Paper two types of metropolitan government are proposed. Provinces can choose the type of metropolitan, district or local municipality to be established in their respective provinces. One such type is that of metropolitan governments with ward committees. These are category A municipalities. They consist of a metropolitan council which exercises the complete range (legislative, executive and administrative) of municipal powers and duties, and also of ward committees which are area-based committees whose boundaries coincide with ward committees. Ward committees will be chaired and convened by the councillor elected to the ward. They have no original powers and duties. They are established as committees of the metropolitan council
and have delegated powers and functions only. They may have advisory powers and the right to be consulted on specific issues. Ward committees may also correspond to the centralized service centres which bring administration closer to the residents.

The demarcation of boundaries of district councils and local councils must take into account the fact that the concentration of wealth and resources in South Africa lies within the cities and towns, and large populations reside outside these centres. To contend with the situation the boundaries of district and local councils must be demarcated in terms of their capacity to generate revenue for the district concerned. For that purpose the boundaries of district councils must:

- Incorporate a variety of settlement types, major market towns and centres,
- incorporate all rural settlements including trust lands, mission locations villages, tribal and communal areas,
- encompass areas which promote development and generate services as well as revenue,
- be large enough to overcome apartheid boundaries and achieve economic equality in respect of service delivery,
- not be too large to make them unmanageable, and
- incorporate farms to give farm workers access to political power and services (Nthai, 1995:109-110).

The same sentiments were confirmed earlier by the ANC policy document “Ready To Govern”, which addressed the issue of local government structures. According to this policy document the ANC believes that “effective rural local government in South Africa’s rural areas differs in important respects from urban areas. The organisation believes that it is therefore appropriate to create district councils within rural areas. This will enable rural communities to develop their own responses to the particular development challenges that they face.
The author further states that “as the ANC, we need to develop our policy on ward committees. We need to give guidance to ANC-run municipalities on how these committees should be elected and what political meaning should be given to the “diversity of interests” that the law requires to be represented in these committees. Ideally, the ward committees should be used to mobilise the broadest range of interests in the community behind progressive goals as part of the overall national democratic transition.

Attempts should be made to ensure representation of civic, development, trade union business, taxi, women and youth, religious, cultural and other organisations. Organisations can be clustered and asked to forward representatives for election to the committee”. Therefore, in order increase community participation and involvement in district council decisions and activities, it may be necessary to institute development structures at a village or ward level which would fall under the district council (Ready To Govern 1992:13). It is strongly felt that the origin and nature of ward committees came about as a result of these noble ideas.

A ward committee consists of the councillor representing that ward in the council who must also be the chairperson of the committee, and not more than ten other persons. The procedure for electing members must take into account the need for women to be equitably represented in a ward committee and for a diversity of interests in the ward to be represented. Gender equity may be pursued by ensuring that there is an even spread of men and women on a ward committee. A diversity of interests may be pursued by ensuring the on a ward committee inclusion of as many as possible of the following interests groups: youth, women, religious groupings, sports and culture, heath and welfare, business, environment, education, senior citizens, community safety forums, community-based organisation, ratepayers’ association, traditional leaders, agricultural associations, informal traders’ association, the disabled, and employment. Unless a ward councillor wishes to appoint a secretary, the ward committee may appoint a secretary, assistant secretary and a treasurer from its membership to fulfill relevant duties of the ward committee.
2.2.2 The role of ward committees in local governance

A number of duties and functions that may be delegated to ward committees were suggested. The most relevant functions are:

1. To create formal unbiased communication channels as well as co-operative partnerships between the community and the council. This may be achieved as follows:
   (a) (i) advise and make recommendations to the ward councillor on matters and policy affecting the ward;
   (ii) assist the ward councillor in identifying conditions, challenges and the needs of residents;
   (iii) spread information in the ward concerning municipal affairs such as the budget, integrated development planning, service delivery options and municipal properties;
   (iv) receive queries and complaints from residents concerning municipal service delivery, communicate them to council and provide feedback to community on council’s response;
   (v) ensure constructive and harmonious interaction between the municipality and community through the use and co-ordination of ward residents meetings and other community development forums;
   (vi) interact with other forums and organisations on matters affecting the ward.

(b) to serve as a mobilizing agent for community action. This may be achieved as follows:
   (i) attending to all matters that affect and benefit the community;
   (ii) acting in the best interest of the community;
   (iii) ensuring the active participation of the community in: service payment campaigns; IDPs; municipality’s budget process; service delivery and by-laws processes (Heydenrych, 2004:4-5).

The Draft Guidelines for the Establishment and Operation of Ward Committees, 2004 further elaborate on the role of ward committees. In terms of these guidelines no executive powers should be delegated to ward committee members. A ward committee may express dissatisfaction to the municipal council on the non-performance of a ward councillor. The major
concern here is whether the current status of the ward committee can enable them to express such dissatisfaction without the necessary capacity to do so. The guidelines further suggest that a ward committee may, subject to available capacity and resources, conduct an annual satisfaction survey in order to assist the committee in the execution of its functions and powers. The satisfaction survey should be administered in the ward by ward committee members under the supervision of the ward councillor and with the administrative support of the municipality.

It is self-evident that the principles of democracy, accountability and involvement imply adequate communication as a two-way exercise between the municipality and the local community. Ward committees, therefore, are clearly meant to enhance constructive interaction between a municipality and the local community. This interaction is governed by certain rights and duties set out in Section 4 and 5 of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000). Section 5 (1) is particularly useful in outlining citizen rights to:

“(a) (i) contribute to the decision-making process of the municipality; and
(ii) submit written or oral recommendations, representations and complaints to the municipal council or to another political structure or a political office bearer or the administration of the municipality.
(b) to prompt responses to their written or oral communications, including complaints to the municipal council.
(c) to be informed of decisions of the municipal council, or another political structure or any political office bearer of the municipality, affecting their rights, property and reasonable expectations”. (This, in the broad sense, constitutes the legal and policy framework for ward committees).

2.3 The policy framework for public participation

It is also found important to look at the policy framework that governs the local sphere of government. By considering such policy framework it will be easier for the reader to have a clear picture of how the activities of ward committees must be aligned to these pieces of legislation.
2.3.1 Reconstruction and development programme (RDP)

The integrated development plan as an approach which is designed to encourage public participation can also be significantly influenced by two more policy frameworks, namely the reconstruction and development programme (RDP) and the growth employment and redistribution (GEAR) strategy. The ward committee as the most important tool that is available to the communities for their participation in matters of local government must play a significant role in the RDP.

The first two sentences of the RDP document describe the context within which the IDP is supposed to function: “The RDP is an integrated, coherent socio-economic policy framework. It seeks to mobilise all our people and our country’s resources towards the final eradication of the results of apartheid and the building of a democratic, non-racial and non-sexist future” (RDP, 1994:4). The above statement means that the RDP is a policy framework aimed at mobilising the people of the country and the resources in an integrated and coherent manner to address the legacy of apartheid. The RDP emphasises the developmental role of local government and focuses on:

- Delivering and maintaining affordable infrastructure services;
- integrating areas which were once divided under apartheid;
- strengthening the capacity of local government to produce services;
- capacity-building to strengthen community based structures to assist in local planning and implementation;
- ensuring a more equitable role for women, and

The RDP is an integrated socio-economic policy framework. It aims to mobilize citizens and resources of the country to eradicate the results of apartheid and to build a democratic, non-racist and non-sexist future. It also encourages the community to get involved in and take responsibility for the
implementation of development to improve their quality of life (Van der Waldt and Nkipe, 2001:109). Ceasar (1999:25) shares the same view with the above authors and defines the RDP as an integrated, coherent socio-economic policy framework. It seeks to mobilize all our people and our country’s resources towards the final eradication of the imbalances of the past.

2.3.2 Government employment and redistribution policy (GEAR)

GEAR could be regarded as the first authoritative document of the National Growth and Development Strategy (NGDS). Stewart (1997:9 in Ceasar 1999:27) states that the GEAR strategy could be seen as an indication of a new approach to policy which is top-down, yet flexible and adaptable. GEAR, set in motion in 1996, places great emphasis on an export-orientated economy, and will lead to international openness and competition (Ceasar, 1999:27).

The GEAR also focuses on the social and sectoral policies in keeping with the RDP objectives. It further contributes towards the upliftment of the community in that it focuses on education, health and welfare services, housing, land reform and infrastructure. One of the major focus areas of GEAR is the creation of job opportunities. By creating employment, and by providing greater access to these opportunities, it will benefit the community and thus the country as a whole in the upliftment that will take place (Van der Waldt & Knipe, 2001:113).

To conclude the section, it is worth mentioning that the legislation in the RDP and GEAR strategy attests to the statutory obligation of all municipalities to formulate integrated development plans together with all stakeholders, i.e. community organisations, individuals, the business sector and other interested groups within their area of jurisdiction (Ceasar 1999:27).
The Constitution of 1996 (Section 152) provides for the objectives of local government as follows:

1. Provide democratic and accountable government for local communities,
2. ensure the provision of services to communities in a suitable manner,
3. promote social and economic development,
4. promote a safe and healthy environment, and
5. encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of Local Government.

These objectives must be achieved within the local council’s financial and administrative capacity. In order to achieve these objectives, section 153 of the Constitution (1996) further commits local government through a developmental focus and orientation to: “structure and manage its administration and budgeting and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community and to promote the social and economic development of the community, and to participate in national and provincial development programmes” (Caesar, 14999: 2). It is therefore concluded from the above that as a result of the developmental role of local government the establishment of ward committees has an important role to play towards the improvement of the welfare of the community.

Furthermore, section 151 of the Constitution of 1996 states the following regarding the status of municipalities:

- The local sphere of government consists of municipalities, which must be established for the whole of the territory of the Republic.
- The executive and legislative authority of a municipality is vested in its municipal council.
A municipality has the right to govern, on its own initiative, the local government affairs of its community, subject to national and provincial legislation, as provided for in the Constitution.

The national or provincial government may not compromise or impede a municipality's ability or right to exercise its powers or perform its functions.

In terms of section 152 (1) of the Constitution the objects of local government are to:

- Provide democratic and accountable government for local communities;
- ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner;
- promote social and economic development;
- promote a safe and healthy environment;
- encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in matters of local government.

(2) A municipality must strive, within its financial and administrative capacity, to achieve the objects set out in subsection (1).

The range of the study can also be derived from the provisions of section 155 (1) of the Constitution which provides for the following categories of municipalities:

- **Category A**: A municipality that has exclusive executive and legislative authority in its area.
- **Category B**: A municipality that shares municipal executive and legislative authority in its area with a category C municipality within whose area it falls.
- **Category C**: A municipality that has municipal executive and legislative authority in an area that includes more than one municipality.
2.3.4 The white paper on local Government

The White Paper on Local Government (1998:3) puts forward a vision of a developmental local government, which centres on working with local communities to find sustainable ways to meet their needs and promote the quality of their lives. It discusses four characteristics of developmental local government, namely exercising municipal powers and functions in a manner which maximises their impact on social development and economic growth; playing an integrating and coordinating role to ensure alignment between public (including all spheres of government) and private investment within the municipal area, democratising development; and building social capital through providing community leadership and vision, and seeking to empower marginalised and excluded groups within the community. It urges local government to focus on realizing developmental outcomes, such as the provision of household infrastructure and services; the creation of livable, integrated cities, towns and rural areas; and the promotion of local economic development and community empowerment and redistribution.

It emphasises the potential of development planning as a mechanism to enable prioritization and integration in municipal planning processes, and strengthen the links between the development and institutional planning processes. It proposes a process for the development of a performance management system for local government; and suggests ways in which municipalities can engage citizens and community groups in the affairs of the municipalities in their capacities as voters, citizens affected by municipal policy, consumers and end-users of municipal services, and partners in resource mobilisation for the development of the municipal area.

2.3.5 The Municipal Systems Act

Section 17 (2) of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000), provides that a municipality must establish appropriate mechanisms, processes and
procedures to enable the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality, and must for this purpose provide for:

- the receipt, processing and consideration of petitions and complaints lodged by the members of local community;
- notification and public comment procedures, when appropriate;
- public meetings and hearings by the municipal council and other political structures and political office bearers of the municipality, when appropriate;
- consultative sessions with locally recognised community organisations and, where appropriate, traditional authorities; and
- report-back to the local community.

Subsection (3) further provides that, when establishing mechanisms, processes and procedures in terms of subsection (2), the municipality must take into account the special needs of:

- People who cannot read or write;
- people with disabilities; and
- women; and other disadvantaged groups.

The view is that the ward committees are the appropriate structures through which to channel all these services.

### 2.3.6 The Municipal Structures Act

In terms of section 72 (1) of the Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998), only metropolitan and local municipalities may have ward committees. Subsection (3) of the Act provides that the object of a ward committee is to enhance participatory democracy in local government. Section 73 of this Act states that if a metro or local municipality decides to have ward committees, it must establish a ward committee for each ward. In terms of subsection (2) a ward committee consists of:

- the councillor representing such ward in the council who must also be the chairperson of the committee; and
- not more than ten other persons.
Section 74 of this Act provides that a ward committee (a) may make recommendations on any matter affecting its ward to:

- the ward councillor; or
- through the ward councillor, to the metro or local council, the executive committee, the executive mayor or the relevant metropolitan sub-council; and

It therefore stands to reason that the municipal council can intervene when the ward committees have shortfalls. Ward committees are the key instruments to people-centered and participatory democratic local government. They have to encourage democratic practices and community participation in municipalities as outlined in the Municipal Systems Act, 2000.

2.4 The tenets of public participation of ward committees in municipal affairs

The concept of public participation is not a new invention in the South African public policy arena. The new democratic dispensation is putting more emphasis on this aspect. The local government sphere is the custodian of this concept. This section will focus attention on the tenets of public participation which are approaches that are designed to encourage the public to take part in the affairs of local government.

2.4.1 Integrated development plans (IDPs)

It is required of developmental municipalities to adopt IDPs as a means to set out their vision, needs, priorities, goals and service delivery strategies. In terms of the law, the community of a municipality must have a say in both the content of the IDP and the process by which it is drafted. The IDP provides a framework for determining the budget of the municipality. It is closely linked to the performance management system of a municipality in terms of which a municipality’s progress is judged, especially by the residents. The IDP is not only a plan. It is also a strategic instrument, a management tool, a method of running a municipality. It provides a framework for all the activities of a
municipality. It is also meant, over time, to be an important site of effecting co-operative governance in practice (Carrim, 2001:112 –113).

(IDP is a process through which a municipality can establish a development plan for the short, medium and long-term, Parnell and Pieterse (1999:77) go on to assert that “An IDP enables a municipality to:

- Assess the current reality in the municipal area, including economic, social and environmental trends, available resources, skills and capabilities,
- assess the varied needs of the community and different interest
groups,
- prioritise these needs in order of urgency, importance and constitutional and legislative imperatives,
- establish frameworks and set goes to meet these needs,
- devise strategies to achieve the goals within specific timeframes,
- develop and implement projects and programmes to achieve key objectives.
- establish targets and monitoring tools/instruments to measure impact and performance.
- budget effectively with limited resources and meet strategic objectives and
- regularly monitor and adapt the development programme based on the underlying development framework and development indicators.”

Bekker and Leide (2003 145-147) agree that IDP is an instrument to identify and prioritise the basic needs of communities, and enable municipalities to manage both horizontal as well as vertical programmes aimed at social and economic development. Integrated planning implies participative planning in particular, planning with a range of institutions in civil society. The White Paper on Local Government provides “one of the strengths of IDP is that it recognises the linkages between development, delivery and democracy.
Pycroft (1996: 155) almost shares the same idea when he asserts that IDPs seek to position municipalities at the centre of a complex matrix of organizations within the council’s area of jurisdiction where they will take responsibility for managing both horizontal and vertical dimensions of integration.

Schedule 6 of the Local Government Transition Second Amendment Act, 1996 (Act 97 of 1996) clearly stipulates that a local authority’s IDP must address the following:

1. Topographical and physical characteristics of the area concerned.
2. Population distribution within the area concerned.
3. Existing demarcation of areas pertaining to municipal affairs and services, including areas of municipal borders and areas existing before 1991 as areas of such municipal borders (if any), as well as areas of regional services councils and joint services boards.
4. Existing and potential land usage, town and transport planning, including industrial, business, commercial and residential usage and planning.
5. Economy, functionality, efficiency and financial liability with regard to the administration and rendering of services within the area concerned.
6. Development potential in relation to the availability of sufficient land for a reasonable foreseeable period to meet the spatial needs of the existing and potential residents of the proposed area for their residential business, recreational and amenity use.
7. Interdependence of a community of interest between residents in respect of residency, work, commuting and recreation.
8. The integrated urban economy as dictated by commercial, industrial and residential linkages.
9. The will of the local community.

Bauer (2000:98) further states that the function of IDPs is to serve as the framework for mobilising and prioritising the use of development resources, and aligning material capacity and systems with strategic development objectives. They also enable meaningful engagement with stakeholder groups around concrete development priorities. IDP is a process especially designed
to enable local authorities to plan effectively for development in their area and empower local authorities to become strategic thinkers and effective planners for development, and involves the following aspects:

- Working with the community to assess community needs
- Developing a common vision and stating priorities and goals.
- Accessing what resources are available
- Designing programmes and projects
- Making sure that municipal programmes are coordinated with those of other local, provincial and national authorities.
- Making sure that plans for different sectors such as water, housing, waste and transport work well together
- Proper financial planning and budgeting
- Plans for implementation
- On-going monitoring and evaluation of programmes to ensure that they are on track (IDP Guide 1997 in Bauer, 2000:98).

According to Ceasar (1999:21), the Minister of Provincial and Local Government in his foreword to the IDP User-Friendly Guide 1998 stated that “local government is at the heart of the development process in South Africa. Through its grassroots linkages, infrastructure investment programmes, local economic development strategies, partnerships with the private sector, and integrated development plans, Local government is the public service agency best able to have a direct and enduring impact on the lives of its citizens. The new Constitution and Local Government legislation give municipalities significant powers to meet these challenges.

It is also found necessary to briefly outline the process of the IDP as an approach designed to encourage public participation. In terms of the guideline document on Provincial and Local Intergovernmental Relations (DPLG,2004:14) the IDP process commences with the district municipalities which must adopt an IDP district framework. The district framework must, among other things, identify provincial planning requirements according to Section 27(2) (a) of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000). Provincial governments
should compile all district frameworks and scrutinise them for the inclusion of all provincial planning requirements. If certain planning requirements are not included, provincial Governments should inform, the district municipality concerned of the omission and urge it to amend its district framework accordingly.

The guideline document (dplg:14) further provides that each municipality must adopt a process plan outlining how the municipality will go about drafting its IDP. These process plans must be checked to ensure there are sufficient mechanisms for consultation by the municipality with government in formulating the IDP in accordance with the provisions of Section 29(1) (b) of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000).

Similarly to the district frameworks, process plans must identify provincial planning requirements as provided for in Section 29 (1) (a) of the Systems Act. Provincial governments should compile all process plans and scrutinise them for inclusion of all provincial planning requirements. If a municipality does not include certain planning requirements, provincial government should inform the relevant municipality of the omission and urge it to amend its process plan accordingly.

The following are the key issues for consideration by provincial government in the IDP process:

- Examine IDP process plans for consultation.
- Scrutinise process plans and district frameworks for provincial and national planning requirements.
- Assist in drafting, adopting and receiving the IDPs.
- Facilitate alignment with national and provincial programmes.

Section 32 of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000), outlines the process applying to the submission of the IDP to the MEC (Member of the Executive Committee). Within ten days after the IDP has been approved, a copy must be submitted to the MEC. A summary of the process plan, a
statement explaining that the process has been complied with, and a copy of
the relevant district framework, must accompany the submission (dplg,
2004:14) The MEC must review the IDPs. Examples of the questions that
need to be answered are:

1. Does the IDP adhere to the Act? Does the IDP contain all the core
components that are listed in section 26 of the Systems Act and the Local
Government: Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations,
2001? Did the municipality, in drafting its IDP, consult the local community
meaningfully on development needs and priorities in terms of Section
29(1)(b)(1) of the Systems Act? Did the drafting process allow for local
communities to participate in the drafting of the IDP (s 29(1)(b)(11): Were
organs of state, in particular traditional authorities, consulted (s 29(1)(b)(iii)?

2. Did the municipality follow its process plan?

3. Is the IDP aligned with the strategies of other municipalities or organs of
state? What does an IDP look like? If an IDP does not comply with the
Systems Act or is contrary to any of the plans of other municipalities or the
provincial or national government, the MEC can request a municipality to
change its IDP in accordance with the MEC’s proposals. If there is something
wrong with the process that the municipality followed in drafting its IDP, the
MEC can request the municipality to comply with its own process plan or with
a provision in the Systems Act concerning the IDP process. If necessary the
municipality must change the content of the IDP after it has followed the
correct process in accordance with Section 32 (2)(b) of the Municipal Systems

Both theoretical and practical concepts of the IDP are strategically used by
local governments in transformation to bring together a number of separate
plans and instruments for planning and management. According to Ceasar
(1999:42), the process for the formulation of an IDP can be divided into
different phases. One outstanding aspect of the IDP is the fact that it is non-
prescriptive. This leaves ample scope for a municipality to develop an IDP
according to its particular needs. Furthermore the current process of IDP is
different from the way it was done in the past. The difference is manifested in
the fact that the ordinary citizens can participate in the drafting of an IDP. The
municipality invites members of the community to participate in the process of formulating an IDP in accordance with the needs of the citizenry within its jurisdiction. The IDP process is not a blueprint but merely an attempt to serve as a guideline according to which an IDP can be formulated within the parameters of the legislative framework. Formulating an IDP can thus be viewed as a social learning process aimed at empowering the people to work towards sustainable development. The different phases of IDP aim to provide a base document for future planning within Local Government. Important aspects of such a document include flexibility and adaptability in order to accommodate any change in the needs of the community.

The starting point for IDP is an assessment of the current reality of the municipality. For future plans to be clearly directed and realistic it is imperative for the municipality to understand its current situation. An analysis of the current situation can provide valuable and useful information for all local activities. It can also serve as a platform upon which future plans are to be based, and it helps to mobilize a much broader spectrum of resources, skills and capacities (Planact 1997:22 in Ceasar 1999:45).

In order to effectively perform its developmental mandate the municipality must establish a vision and mission statement. This is phase two of the IDP process. Within the context of an IDP a vision statement aims to know where an organisation is at present and to determine where it wants to go. The vision for development must, however, be established in collaboration with the diverse community. It must recognize the different aspirations and ambitions, priorities and perspectives of the community. All the stakeholders must therefore participate in the process that results in a shared vision.

Once the vision has been established the next phase entails the development of a framework that aims to identify the core issues and goals. This is the third phase of the IDP process. It provides general direction to the development of strategies and decision-making over the medium-term (CSIR, 1998 Section C9 in Ceasar 1999:47). This phase involves more technical support than the preceding phases. It is the set of principles, priorities, goals and ideas that
form the framework according to which the decisions are made. The Workbook on a Step by Step Approach to IDP (CSIR Work book 2, 1998:14 in Ceasar 1998:48) views this phase as essential in the IDP process because it provides the Development Tribunal with a framework to guide their decisions, it also provides the private sector with a framework within which to operate, and it will assist local authorities in the traditional development control function by providing them with a clear yardstick against which to manage land use.

Once the development framework is in place, the next step will be to formulate integrated development strategies. According to Ceasar (1999:48), in this phase it is important to set clear and realistic goals which should reflect the expected achievements of the municipality. These goals need to reflect the priorities and the collective priorities of the broader community (IDP User-Friendly Guide, 1998:26 in (Ceasar 1999:48). There are two reasons why the prioritisation of identified needs is essential. Firstly, because there are not sufficient resources to meet every single request, and secondly, because the diverse communities within the municipality may have different priorities (Planact 1997:22 in Ceasar 1999:48).

In terms of Section 26 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Bill (January 1999), the developmental objectives and strategies of the municipality must be aimed at meeting the Council’s development priorities and must contain particulars of the specific priority programmes and projects to be implemented as well as improvements in delivery of services identified as priorities; also take into account options available to the Council to meet its development objectives in partnership with the private sector or other municipalities; and take into account development principles and policies of the national and provincial governments, and be reconcilable with national and provincial development planning requirements building on the municipality in terms of national or provincial legislation.

The next phase of the IDP process concerns the operational strategies. One may safely refer to the phase as the implementation phase. According to Ceasar (1999:49) during this phase, benefits which are stipulated in the
development goals are delivered. Kellerman (1997:50 in Caesar 1999:49) views this phase as the most important by stating that “all planning design and numerous decisions culminate in physical implementation”. This author further contends that it is during this phase that overarching development objectives have to blend with grassroots actions, combining a range of interrelated actions in order to secure sustainability of the development investment. According to Cushworth and Franks (1993:85 in Caesar 1999:49)’ this phase is considered essential because it entails the process during which project inputs are converted into project outputs. According to these authors this phase provides the basis to budget for money and resources, to identify bottlenecks and to test assumptions. They also regard this phase as the basis for accountability and measurement (Cushworth and Franks, 1993:86 in Caesar 1999:49). The theory and strategy to project management principles are important in this phase (Van der Waldt, 1998:23-25).

In the view expressed above, it is important to note that practical implementation can be considered to be the real test for projects: To this effect Kellerman (1997-56 in Caesar 1999:49) emphasizes that this stage of “community infrastructure projects require the careful coordination of activities and responsibilities between a range of role-players”. These role players include: representative community organisations who are responsible for daily supervision, the organisation of daily tasks and control over project progress, community facilitators, community-based staff who are responsible for assisting project committees in managing the project ensuring day-to-day communication between project committees and other role-players in the implementation process, and consultants who assume responsibility for guiding implementation tasks for communities that lack the technical skills to plan, design and implement infrastructure projects.

Having discussed the IDP as an approach designed to encourage public participation it is imperative that the following section should focus on budget as another tool that is designed to encourage the communities to participate in their local council matters.
2.4.2 Municipal budget

Municipal budgets are critical tools for refocusing the resources and capacity of the municipality beyond developmental goals. Budget must be developed in relation to the policies and programmes put forward in IDPs. Given that resources are scarce, community participation in the development of the municipal budget is essential. Participation provides an opportunity for community groups to present their needs and concerns. In terms of Section 153 (a) of the Constitution Act, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996), one of the developmental duties of a municipality is to structure and manage its administration and budgeting and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community and promote the social and economic development programmes.

To function, an organisation needs money. Local government without money would merely be a talk-shop. The viability of local government, the level at which services are rendered, and the quality of those services are inextricably linked to the financial resources available to it. The assumption is that if funds are available local government will be able to procure other resources such as staff, materials and equipment to enable it to perform its assigned responsibilities.

Several issues are common to all municipalities of whatever category or type, but the most important issue at this juncture is money. The amalgamation of previously divided areas brought increased municipality responsibilities, but not a corresponding increase in revenue or the tax base. This and other factors, such as chronic backlogs, deteriorating infrastructure and declining creditworthiness, have ensured that municipalities in general are under financial stress and some are in financial crisis (Pimestone et al., 1998:2). From a constitutional point of view, any new system of local government must take cognisance of the primary role of municipalities, namely the provision of essential services (such as water, sanitation, electricity etc.) to all local communities. This has serious budgetary implications for local councils (Franzisen 1998 in Pimestone et al., 1998:33).
Municipal budgets are a critical tool for re-focusing the resources and capacity of the municipality behind developmental goals. Budgets must be developed in relation to the policies and programmes put forward in municipal integrated development plans. Given that resources are scarce, community participation in the development of both integrated development plans and municipal budgets is essential. Participation provides an opportunity for community groups to present their needs and concerns. It enables them to be involved in the process of prioritization, and to understand and accept the trade-offs which need to be made between competing demands for resources. Current budgeting, accounting, financial reporting and financial management practices of municipalities suffer from a number of weaknesses.

These weaknesses may act as a disincentive to community participation and to private investment. In some municipalities these weaknesses include: unrealistic budgeting, poor credit control, a lack of budgeting and financial discipline, a lack of user-friendly and accessible information on the budget process (White Paper on Local Government 1998:27). According to the While Paper on Local Government (1998:29), the municipality should develop a financial plan involving a medium-term projection of capital and recurrent expenditure. This medium-term projection forms the basis according to which annual budgets can be drawn up. In order to realise the goals set out in the IDP the financial plan must also indicate the medium-term (five-year period) changes in the budget (White Paper on Local Government (1998:30 in Ceasar 1999:50).

In terms of Section 214 (1) of the Constitution, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996), an Act of Parliament must provide for the equitable division of revenue raised nationally among the national, provincial and local spheres of government. In compliance with the provisions of Section 214(1) of the Constitution, Parliament passed the Division of Revenue Act, 2000 (Act 16 of 2000), to provide for the equitable division of revenue raised nationally among the national, provincial and local spheres of government for the 2000/20001 financial year and to provide for matters connected therewith.
In terms of Section 21(1) of the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act 56 of 2003) the mayor of a municipality must coordinate the processes for receiving the municipality’s integrated development plan and budget-related policies to ensure that the tabled budget and any revisions of the integrated development plan and budget-related policies are mutually consistent and credible. Section 22 of the Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act 56 of 2003), requires that immediately after an annual budget is tabled in a municipal council, the accounting officer of the municipality must in accordance with Chapter 4 of the Municipal Systems Act make public the annual budget and the documents referred to in section 17(3) and invite the local community to submit representations in connection with the budget.

Section 23(1) of the Municipal Finance Management Act further requires that when the annual budget has been tabled, the municipal council must consider any views of the local community. In order to encourage public participation the National Treasury may issue guidelines on the manner in which municipal councils should process their annual budgets, including guidelines on the formation of a committee of the council to consider the budget and the local public hearings. Ward committees are the most essential tool to be utilized to encourage public participation in the budget process.

The above points are raised with this notion in mind that the municipal local council is the local legislature of the local municipality. The objective of financial control at local government level is the same as that at central government level, namely, rendering accounts in public to the local legislature (the council) in order to allow the voters-cum-taxpayers to assess whatever the expenditure of public funds contributes to the effective realization of the purposes for which the money has been appropriated.

At local government level, the local executive authority must give account to the local legislature. The organisational rules for financial control at the local government level within a unitary system differ from control in the central
government sphere in the sense that they can be separated into external and internal control. For an example even in federal systems, such as in the United States of America, local authorities are regarded as subsystems legally created by their States. As creations of their states, they can exercise only those government functions especially granted to them (Gildenhuys, 1997:100). With regard to the notion of inclusiveness of the budget process raised earlier on, it is in doubt whether the local councils of the two municipalities are able to exercise control over their council budgets.

According to Meiring and de Villiers (2001:209-12) an effective system of municipal budgeting and accounting is a basic requirement for any executive institution of government, and is of particular importance for all municipal operational work and that of the state or community. Government activities must be adequately performed and measured for their impact on development to be determined. Effective performance and management depend largely on the availability of adequate resources, i.e. human and financial resources because any local authority needs, *inter alia*, money and such money must be provided before a service or any good can be delivered. Determining financial needs, the sources of revenue, the collection, safe keeping and paying out of money, are therefore essential functions, which need to be undertaken with care and responsibility. A specific financial process is therefore required and such a process is general to all local councils. If community participation in budget processes in those local municipalities under discussion is not based on a ward-to-ward committee approach, it will be difficult to determine the adequate budgetary requirements of those communities before services are rendered.

The execution of legislation and government on a democratic basis should for organisational purposes, always start with an elected council. Such council usually has a large membership to ensure performance on a continuous basis. The second step therefore is to appoint a committee or committees from among the members of the council (Meiring and de Villiers, 2001:128). It is here where the establishment of a finance committee comes to the fore. The municipal finance committee must be regarded as the leading executive
body at the local government level. In some countries where the multiple committee system exists, local councils are obliged to appoint a finance committee which is supposed to handle all financial matters on its behalf. Apart from the council itself, the finance committee is the most important body as far as the financial management of the council is concerned. The finance committee is endowed by the council with authority to supervise and control all the financial matters of the local authority with the concomitant responsibility to report back to the council and to account for all discrepancies (Gildenhuys, 1997:112).

The municipal finance committees also act as an oversight body over the mission of the financial operations of the local council. The mission is to maintain the financial management systems and record of the council in accordance with the generally accepted accounting principles and to procure equipment, materials, supplies, contractual services and equipment maintenance in a timely, efficient and effective manner, and in compliance with applicable laws and regulations of municipal policies. The finance committee is responsible for ensuring that staff dealing with financial matters work effectively and efficiently with both internal and external customers to provide services such as to maintain accurate reliable financial information for all municipal funds, maintain accurate financial records for all city assets, liabilities, revenues and expenditure expenses. It must also encourage the preparation of an accurate and timely annual financial report for the council (http://pen.ci.santa-monica.ca.us). The use of the finance committee within the local municipalities under investigation is minimal in so far as the involvement of ward committees in the budget process of the council is concerned. The tendency is for the finance committee to concentrate on the internal financial matters of the council. This is a matter of capacity and the lack of resources in those local municipalities.

2.4.3 Performance management

In terms of section 16(1) (a) (ii) (iii) of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 2000) on the development of a culture of community participation, a municipality must develop a culture of governance
that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance, and must, among other things, for this purpose encourage and create conditions for the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality, including (1) the establishment, implementation and review of its performance management system, (ii) the monitoring and review of its performance, including the outcomes and impact of such performance. Section 38 of the Act stipulates that a municipality must (a) establish a performance management system that is: (i) commensurate with its resources; (ii) best suited to circumstances; and (iii) in line with the priorities, objectives, indicators and targets contained in its integrated development plans; (b) promote a culture of performance management among its political structures, political office bearers and councillors and in its administration; and (c) administer its affairs in an economical, effective, efficient and accountable manner.

According to Bauer (2000:101), the implementation of each IDP should be carefully monitored so as to ensure that the results are achieved. A performance management system is therefore required to measure the success of IDPs. In order to do this, local authorities need to set key performance indicators (KPIs). These are targets which they can use to check that programmes are on track and that resources are being used efficiently. Community groups should be involved in setting KPIs as this will help to build commitment throughout the community. In time, a national performance management system can be developed, based on the experiences of local authorities. This will help to identify problems and address them before they become crises (White Paper on Local Government, 1998:31-5). Oldfield and Parnell (1998:35-36), state that “at all stages developmental local government must be able to accurately and flexibly assess the needs of residents and their environment socially, economically, politically and environmentally. We need tools to reflect how successfully our IDPs have achieved the goals of the Constitution, in other words, we need to know if the local government system is really successfully doing its job for all South Africans. We can only tell this with any certainty if local authorities commit
themselves to specific targets which can then be measured or evaluated in some way”.

Every municipality must include these indicators in their integrated development plans (IDPs). The general KPIs are:

- Percentage of households with access to all basic household services;
- percentage of households earning less than R1100 per month with access to all free basic services;
- percentage of capital budget spent on projects identified in terms of the IDP;
- number of jobs created through local economic development initiatives;
- number of people from employment equity target groups employed in three highest levels of management;
- percentage of the budget spent on implementing the workplace skills plan; and
- financial viability.

All municipalities must report on these KIPs. Each year, the National Minister produces a consolidated report on general KPIs across all municipalities, which is published in the Government Gazette and submitted to all the MECs (members of the Executive Councils) in terms of Section 48 of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000, (DPLG, 2004:10).

According to the White Paper on Local Government (1998:17) performance management is critical to ensure that plans are being implemented, that they are having the desired development impact, and that resources are being used efficiently. Municipalities currently set their own measures of performance, or key performance indicators. Key performance indicators vary greatly from municipality to municipality and cover both efficiency measures
and human development indices. Key performance indicators can provide valuable information for two purposes,

Firstly, development indices (such as the Household Development Indices) can help municipalities to know their areas better and plan more effectively. Development indices also assist municipalities to assess the impact and effectiveness of the development strategies which adapt, and make adjustments to their plans as required. The Central Statistical Services already provide useful indicators to assist municipalities in planning for their areas. Secondly indicators which measure value for money in service provision can provide valuable guidance for municipal organisational transformation. Efficiency and quality indicators enable municipalities to set targets for continued improvement in their operations, to prioritise areas where organisational change is required, and assess the success of their transformation programmes. Involving communities in developing municipal key performance indicators increases the accountability of the municipality. Some municipalities may prioritise the amount of time it takes a municipality to answer a query, others will prioritise the cleanliness of an area or the provision of water to a certain number of households. Whatever the priorities, by involving communities in setting key performance indicators and reporting back to communities on performance, accountability is increased and public trust in the local government system enhanced.

Performance management is a system that is used to make sure that all parts of municipality work together to achieve the goals and targets that are set. The municipality must have clear goals and specific targets of what they have to do and how their performance will contribute to achieve overall goals and targets. This means that performance of individuals, departments and the municipality as a whole should be monitored to make sure the targets are met (Guide on PM ) (http://www.etu.org.za).

In terms of Section 39 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000), the executive committee or executive mayor of a municipality or if the municipality does not have an executive committee or executive mayor, a committee of councillors appointed by the municipal
council must among other things: manage the development of the municipality’s performance management system; assign responsibility in this regard to the municipal manager; and submit the proposed system to the municipal council for adoption. Section 40 of the Act stipulates that a municipality must establish mechanisms to monitor and review its performance management system; and submit the proposed system to the municipal council for adoption.

Section 40 of the Act stipulates that a municipality must establish mechanisms to monitor and review its performance management system. Section 4 (1) of the Municipal Systems Act provides that a municipality must in terms of its performance management system and in accordance with any regulations and guidelines that may be prescribed: set appropriate performance indicators as yardstick for measuring performance, including outcomes and impact, with regard to the municipality’s development priorities and objectives set out in its integrated development plan; set measurable performance targets with regard to each of those development priorities and objectives; and against the key performance indicators and targets set in terms of paragraphs (a) and (b); monitor performance, and measure and review performance at least once a year, (d) take steps to improve performance with regard to those development priorities and objectives where performance targets are not met; and (e) establish a process of regular reporting to: the council, other political structures, political office bearers and staff of the municipality; and the public and appropriate organs of state.

Sub-section (2) of Section 41 provides that the system applied by a municipality nationally, may - (f) by regulation prescribe general key performance indicators that must in compliance with sub-section (1) (c) be devised in such a way that they may serve as an early warning indicator of underperformance. Section 43 (1) of the Act also provides that the Minister for the Department for Provincial and Local Government after consultation with the MECs (Members of the Executive Council) and organised local government representing local government nationally, may (a) by regulation prescribe general key performance indicators that are appropriate and that
can be applied to local government generally; and (g) when necessary, review and adjust those general key performance indicators. Subsection (2) of Section 43 stipulates that key performance indicators set by a municipality must include any general key performance indicators prescribed in terms of subsection in (1) to the extent that these indicators are applicable to the municipality concerned.

In terms of paragraph (9) (1) (a) of the Local Government Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations (2001:10), a municipality must set key performance indicators, including input indicators, output indicators, in respect of each of the development priorities and objectives referred to in Section 26 (c) of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000). Subparagraph (1) requires that a key performance indicator must be measurable, relevant, objective and precise. In setting key performance indicators, a municipality must ensure that committees are involved; and the key performance indicators inform the indicators set for all its administrative units and employees; and for every municipal entity and service providers with which the municipality has entered into a service delivery agreement.

A municipality’s performance management system entails a framework that describes and represents how the municipality’s cycle and processes of performance planning, monitoring, measurement, review, reporting and improvement will be conducted, organised and managed including determining the roles of the different role-players. In developing its performance management system a municipality must ensure that the system complies with all the requirements set out in the Act, demonstrates how it is to operate and be managed from the planning stage up to the stage of performance review and reporting, clarifies the roles and responsibilities of each role-player, including the local community in the functioning of the system, clarifies the processes of implementing the system within the framework of the integrated development planning process; determines the frequency of reporting and the lines of accountability for performance; relates to the municipality’s employee performance management processes, and provides for the procedure by which the system is linked to the municipality’s
integrated development planning processes. A performance management system must be adopted before or at the same time as the commencement by the municipality of the process of setting key performance indicators and targets in accordance with its integrated development plan (Local Government: Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations, 2001:9-10).

In the medium–term a national performance management system is required to assess the overall state of local government, monitor the effectiveness of development and delivery strategies adopted by different municipalities and ensure that scarce resources are utilized efficiently. It would provide early warnings where municipalities are experiencing difficulties and enable other spheres of government to provide appropriate support before a crisis develops. It would also enable municipalities to compare their own performance with that of similar municipalities across the country, identify successful approaches or best practice, and learn from one another (White Paper on Local Government, 1998:27). In concluding this section on performance management it is appropriate to highlight that in terms of Section 42 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000), a municipality, through appropriate mechanisms, processes and procedures established in terms of Chapter 4, must involve the local community in the development, implementation and review of the municipality’s performance management system and, in particular, allow the community to participate in the setting of appropriate key performance indicators and performance targets for the municipality.

Despite the three approaches designed to encourage public participation that have been discussed so far, the next section will give consideration to another tool that is regarded also to encourage public participation, namely, gender mainstreaming.

2.4.4 Gender mainstreaming

The new local government system is a considerable advance over the previous one in providing for the needs and interests of women, and their
active participation in municipal affairs. This is reflected in the electoral system and the many requirements to ensure the involvement of women in the mechanisms, structures and processes of community participation. In terms of the Municipal Systems Act, municipal councils are in fact required to "promote gender equity in the exercise of the municipality’s executive and legislative authority" (Carrim, 2001:115).

Women have a great deal to contribute to local government because of their general versatility and human skills. They double up in a variety of roles as mothers, as wives, as support for their husbands and at the same time at work they are required to fulfil a variety of roles (Local Government Digest, 1996:15).

According to Mirjan van Donk (in Parnell et al, 2002:205), gender and gender equity are contested concepts and can mean different things for different people. The starting point would be that the notion of gender refers to specific roles and responsibilities (and therefore opportunities and resources) allocated to men and women in a particular social context on the basis of their sex.

Throughout the centuries, gender roles have been sanctioned and maintained by political, legal, economic, social, religious and cultural institutions, which has resulted in institutionalised gender inequalities. Gender equality is the state of affairs when systematic inequalities on the basis of a person’s sex are eradicated and each person experiences the same entitlements, benefits and treatment, regardless of his/her sex.

Because women carry a disproportional responsibility for social reproduction, the goods and services provided by local government have a direct bearing on their lives in particular. If basic services, such as water or electricity, are absent, women often assume responsibility for providing these services. Similarly, if facilities like a child-care centre or a clinic are lacking in the community, women tend to provide this service, either free of charge or at a limited cost. The absence of municipal services therefore increases the workload of women. Because organizing these services is such a time-
consuming exercise, women have less time to engage in income-generating activities or leisure. More than that, in their efforts to organize these basic services (for example, while gathering wood for fuel), women become more vulnerable to violent attacks and rape. This sense of vulnerability increases if there is no proper infrastructure, such as roads, street lights or public transport (Parnell et al, 2002:207-8).

The Freedom Charter, adopted at the Congress of the People, Kliptown, on 26 June 1955, among other principles, stipulates that all people shall be entitled to take part in the administration of the country and that the rights of the people shall be the same, regardless of race, colour or sex (http://www.anc.org.za). The same sentiments are echoed by the ANC document “Ready To Govern” when dealing with “human rights for women”. The document clearly stipulates that “special emphasis will have to be given to the realisation of women’s emancipation. Women are discriminated against and subordinated in every area of public and private life. They have inferior access to education and employment and are shut out from decision-making at all levels of society. The ANC supports the principle of equal rights for women and men in all spheres, and the creation of special agencies to ensure that equal opportunity operates in practice.

Women should be able to walk in the streets freely without fear of assault and should be able to feel safe and free from violence in their own homes. In providing that women should be allowed to take their rightful place in every area of South African life without impediment or discrimination, the law should take account of the reality of the lives that women lead and the contribution they make to society through maternity, parenting and household work. Much of the work that women perform goes unrecognized and unpaid, the contribution of women to national income must be acknowledged.”

In terms of the Structures Act women should be equitably represented on ward committees. Women should be categorised as a special interest group in their own right. Political parties must ensure that at least 50 percent of the candidates on the list are female. Increasingly, women are taking their rightful places and seats and are playing influential and prominent roles in our
unfolding political system and society as a whole. Women continue, as they have done under the atrocious apartheid era, to make valuable changes in our society after their dehumanising experiences of the apartheid - colonial past, and socially and economically, women are contributing significantly and substantially to these two spheres of society while making strident calls for change in local government.

More importantly, the constitutional framework protects the rights of women as well as children. Therefore, for women to take their rightful place in local government politics they need to clear the decks of the legacy of socio-economic hurdles and barriers so that they are able to get involved in the establishment of ward committees, ensure that their male counterparts do not dominate or derail the process for their own ends or vested interests. Women have to be robust and vibrant as they approach these new challenges of getting involved in good governance and understanding the world of politics and politicking (DPLG: National Conference on Ward Committees, 2003:3-6).

In order to enhance the participation of women in ward committee affairs the South African Government has entered into a partnership with the Australian Government. The Australian South African Local Governance Partnership (ASALGP) is a three-year project designed to support the continued development and enhancement of South African local government.

In terms of the “Revised Gender and Development Strategy” document (ASALGP, 2002:1) the goal of the project is to enhance the contribution of South African local government to socio-economic development, poverty alleviation and improving the quality of life of the people of South Africa and the objective is to build capacity for the efficient, effective and equitable provision of essential services and infrastructure by municipalities, in cooperation with provincial agencies and other key stakeholders.

As an Australian Government (Aus AID) funded project ASALGP has incorporated a gender perspective. One of the objectives contained in Aus AID’s gender and development policy is to promote women’s participation and leadership in decision-making at all levels. Other relevant objectives include
improving women’s access to education and health care, promoting the human rights of women and assisting efforts to eliminate discrimination against women.

Since all men are created equal they should also be treated equally before the law, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, religion, economic class or social stratification. Equality before the law extends to political equality. All citizens should have equal access to political power and influence in shaping policy (Sabela and Reddy in Reddy 1996:6). In terms of ASALGP (2002:1-2), the project design document, prepared in 2001, specifically identifies the need to give proper attention to the constitutional and legislative gender equity requirements of South Africa.

The Constitution, particularly Chapter 2, states that equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms, everyone is equal before the law and everyone has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law. The Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) is one of the six state institutions supporting constitutional democracy. Its aim is to promote gender equality and to advise and make recommendations to Parliament or any other legislature with regard to any laws or proposed legislation that affect gender equality and the status of women. Whilst local government is required to honour these constitutional and legislative requirements, and despite the 1998 White Paper on Local Government specifically highlighting the need to focus on women’s needs if poverty is to be reduced, the Local Government Transformation Programme has not so far given gender equality a high priority. This is not surprising when the first priority has been to redress the racial inequalities particularly in employment, through affirmative action.

Mirjam van Donk (in Parnell et al. 2002:211) comes close to agreeing with the notion raised above when attesting that “the challenge to realise gender equality through local government service delivery has been taken up by national government in its policy framework, for example, the White Paper on Local Government and subsequent legislation on local government. But as yet, there is little evidence of a coherent approach towards institutionalising a
gender perspective in local government, either by provincial government or municipality, with the exception of a few, innovative initiatives at local level.”

The majority of registered voters in South Africa in the past two elections have been women, and women constitute the majority of the poor, especially the uneducated poor. The research by CGE confirms that women vote because they see it as a tool to improve their position and a survey of rural women undertaken by the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) in 1999 indicated that women had a high level of political awareness, an ability to link issues of concern with the need to vote, a clear ability to articulate expectations and a clear vision of the type of leaders likely to deliver on their needs.

The CGE concludes that “given an opportunity, women do have the necessary qualifications and understanding to be able to participate effectively and influence processes” that target the real needs of the community, but that communities do need to be educated on gender issues and women need to be actively supported in capacity building programmes and structures. In particular, they argue that local governments should increase the ability of women to participate in and influence the integrated development process because household community services are delivered through local government. If the services are inadequate, the impact is directly on women as they are mainly responsible, at the community level, for the collection of water, disposal of waste, care for children, the sick and elderly, provision of clothing and shelter as well as food processing, cleaning and laundry. Lack of suitable services places unnecessary pressure on women to find suitable alternatives so that their families do not suffer (ASALGP, 2002:1-3).

There is a strong feeling that if you want to make sure that women can have a say in your participation process, when you are planning an event, here are some hints: include women on the organizing, coordination or action team, seek their advice on how to find other women to participate, ask them what kind of process will encourage women to participate, think about their special needs for safety and plan to have a secure venue, go to them to get their views, say “woman are specially invited to come” on all invitations and in all
publicity and then will have to follow through with some of these hints (http://www.asalgp.co.za).

Ward committees appear to be an exciting way of achieving one of the aims of local government mentioned in the Republic of South Africa Constitution, i.e. “to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government” (ASALGP, 2004:33). According to the Australia South Africa Local Government Partnership Gender Strategy (2002:4), municipalities have to promote and build local leadership. Many people provide knowledge on the processes and functions of local government partnerships, gender strategy (2002:4) which municipalities have to promote and build local democracy as well as provide community leadership.

Many people lack knowledge of the processes and functions of local government. This can only be achieved when authorities reach out to local people with the aim of informing and consulting with them. This includes how proportional representation and the constituency-based system influence women’s participation.

Municipalities should develop programmes for informing communities on development issues, democracy and democratic procedures and specifically target programmes for women. Women possess a wealth of experience in community matters and it should be in the interest of local municipalities to ensure that women participate, both in decision-making and as a resource for local development planning. Given the opportunity, women have the power to participate effectively and to influence processes that are geared to the development of their communities but there needs to be capacity building for those employed in the municipality who develop programmes, to help them devise and select methodologies to meet the needs of the community they serve, including the development of particular skills involving service delivery.

Women bring many attributes to the decision-making table but the obstacles to women as political decision-makers are rooted in tradition, the gender-based division of labour and access to and control of resources. Despite
progress to date regarding women’s participation in decision-making processes, the political arena is still male dominated so that there should be structured capacity building and training for the effective execution of council matters.

In a paper presented by MS N Dube, speaker of Ethekwini Metropolitan Municipality at the National Conference on Ward Communities (2003:7) in the section an Gender equality, she stated that “the barrier to the advancement of women in the workplace has to fall”. According to her there are three categories of barriers to the advancement of women: Barriers external to the organisation (sex, segregation, socialization experiences, intellectual competence versus femininity, expectance of success, self-confidence); barriers in the organisational culture (in essence in a male-dominated workplace women are relegated to lower-level jobs, sexual harassment, access to role models and mentors); barriers in the organisational structure (this structure mirrors social norms and cultural stereotypes, and power and privilege in the broader society, such as women making up the largest number of lower-paying jobs do not have access to any career ladder or job pipeline; sex discrimination in educational and occupational settings; attitudes to women’s abilities and roles.

The author further goes on to say that in order to improve the position of women in local government employment, the development of legislative and institutional strategies and measures is embodied in the Constitution. The right to equality is entrenched: “every person shall have the right to equality before the law and to equal protection of the law”. This is also the right to gender equality: “no person shall be unfairly discriminated against directly or indirectly and without derogation from the generality of this provision, on one or more of the following grounds: race, gender, sex, ethnic, social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture or language” (National Conference on Ward Committees, 2003:7-8) Having considered the issue of gender in ward committees attention will now in the following section be directed to the role/relationship of traditional leaders/authorities in ward committee matters/ local municipal matters.
2.4.5 The relationship between ward committee members and traditional leaders

The issue of traditional leaders’ participating in the local sphere of government has been a contentious one and publicly well talked about in South Africa. From an observer status or position and/or perspective the most burning issue has been around land ownership as traditional authorities seem to believe that they have traditionally inherited the land ownership, thus the government would be expected to consult them on issues involving operations on the land on which they reside.

According to Reddy (1995:65), a greater threat to a strong rural local government system than the differences that exist between ‘Regional’ and “District” Council positions comes from the traditional leaders. The author goes on to say that there is an irony in this, given the fact that traditional leaders have themselves been victims of centralising tendencies within the former homeland territories. Chiefs had previously acquired significant influence at a local level as a result of the important local coordinating role of magistrates who consulted extensively with them in implementing government policy.

With the establishment of homeland governments many of the powers which had been vested in or exercised through magistrates were centralised within the newly established homeland departments. This often had the effect of emasculating chiefs at a local level, forcing them to rely on a central patronage to retain their authority and livelihoods, usually as members of the various legislative assemblies. However, the threat from the traditional leaders derives less from a principled objective to a strong rural local government system than a lack of clarity about their own future role.

Chapter 11 of the Interim Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1993 (Act 200 of 1993), recognises traditional authorities and makes provision for advisory roles at provincial and national levels. However, it does not specify what the roles of such authorities should be at a local level except by
reference to other applicable laws. Section 182 of the Interim Constitution provides that the traditional leader of a community observing a system of indigenous law and residing on land within the area of jurisdiction of an elected local government shall *ex officio* be entitled to be a member of that local government, and shall be eligible to be elected to any office of such local government.

National legislation may provide for a role for traditional leadership as an institution at local level on matters affecting local communities. The possible role of traditional leaders, as a particular interest group in a ward committee, will depend upon the outcome of the deliberations between government and the coalition of traditional leaders. It is suggested that traditional leaders should be considered as an interest group within a ward.

Chapter 12, Section 211(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996 (Act 108 of 1996), recognises the institution, status and role of traditional leaders according to customary law but subject to the Constitution. Against the background of the strong democratic echoes of the Constitution, stands the question of what role traditional leaders should play in relation to local government. In dealing with the question the framers of the Constitution allowed for little deviation from the principles of democratic governance.

The action here is in agreement with the provision of the Constitution first that, although, “the institution, status and role of traditional leadership, according to customary law are recognised,” it remains subject to the Constitution. Second, in the area of local government, the Constitution provides that “national legislation may provide for a role of traditional leadership as an institution at local level on matters affecting local communities”. The word “may” indicates clearly that there is no constitutionally protected right for the participation of traditional leadership in local government; there has to be prior national legislation.

This reflects a marked shift away from the position that pertained under the Interim Constitution, as stated above. Whereas traditional leaders performed certain state functions in the past (and still in some instances continue to do
so) and accordingly might have been regarded as “organs of state” in the broad sense of the word, this is no longer the case. The responsibility to perform state functions such as allocation of land and provision of services can no longer be claimed on the strength of the Constitution (Mastenbroek and Steytler, 1997:242).

The Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998), is silent on the role of traditional leadership in ward communities. Section 81 of the Act recognises the participation of traditional leaders in municipal councils. In terms of subsection (1): Traditional authorities that traditionally observe a system of customary law in the area of a municipality, may participate through their leaders identified in terms of subsection (2) in the proceedings of the council of that municipality and those traditional leaders must be allowed to attend and participate in any meeting of the council. At ward committee level traditional leaders form part of the community. There is no specific role given to them yet in the current dispensation.

According to the White Paper on Local Government (1998:31), the relationship between traditional leadership and elected rural local government requires clarification. At present traditional leaders are responsible for a number of functions. Their functions include, among other things, acting as head of the traditional authority and as such exercising limited legislative powers and certain executive and administrative powers, presiding over customary law and maintaining law and order, consulting with traditional communities through imbizo/ lekgotla, assisting members of the community in their dealing with the state, advising government on traditional affairs through the houses and council of traditional leaders, convening meetings to consult with communities on needs and priorities and providing information, protecting cultural values and providing a sense of community in their areas through a communal social frame of reference, being the spokespersons generally of their communities, being symbols of unity in the community, being custodians and protectors of the community’s customs and general welfare. Their role in the development of the local area and community includes making recommendations on land allocation and the settling of land disputes,
lobbying government and other agencies for the development of their areas, ensuring that the traditional community participates in decisions on development and contributes to development costs, considering and making recommendations to authorities on trading licences in their areas in accordance with the law.

During consultations with traditional leaders and their communities with local government and other stakeholders, a number of suggestions have been made regarding a suitable model for rural local government in those areas falling under traditional leadership (White Paper on Local Government 1998:35). The results have included the passing of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Amendment Act, 2003 (Act 41 of 2003), which recognises tribal authorities as traditional councils with important functions linked to local government. Therefore, traditional leaders and councils have an important role to play in local government development programmes and service delivery (http://www.paralegaladvice.org.za).

The Traditional Leadership and Governance Act, 2003 (Act 41 of 2003), provides for the recognition of traditional communities as well as the establishment and recognition of traditional councils. In terms of framework, a community may be recognised as a traditional community if it is subject to a system of customs, and observes a system of customary law. Subsection (2) (a) of section 2 stipulates that the Premier of a province may, by notice in the Provincial Gazette, in accordance with the provincial legislation and after consultation with the provincial houses of traditional leaders in the Province, the community concerned, and if applicable the King or Queen under whose authority that community falls recognise a community as a traditional community.

Furthermore, a community can be recognised as a traditional community if it follows a system of traditional leadership according to its own community rules, system of indigenous and customary law. It must be considered that it is the Premier of the Province who must recognise a traditional community which can establish a traditional council to oversee development with the municipal council of that municipality. The Act further stipulates that the
traditional council must be representative of the community in the following ways:

- 33% of its members must be women;
- 40% of its members must be democratically elected;
- The remaining members can be selected by the chief in terms of custom. The traditional council will be able to operate within a defined area (http://www.paralegaladvice.org.za).

In terms of section 4(1) of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Amendment Act, 2003 (Act 41 of 2003), a traditional council has the following functions:

- administering the affairs of the traditional community in accordance with customs and tradition;
- assisting, supporting and guiding traditional leaders in the performance of their functions;
- supporting municipalities in the identification of community needs;
- facilitating the involvement of the traditional community in the development or amendment of the integrated development plan of a municipality in whose area that community resides;
- recommending after consultation with the relevant local and provincial houses of traditional leaders, appropriate interventions by government that will contribute to development and service delivery within the area of jurisdiction of the traditional council;
- participating in the development of policy and legislation at local level;
- participating in development programmes of municipalities and of the provincial and national spheres of government;
- promoting the ideals of co-operative governance, integrated development planning, sustainable development and service delivery;
- promoting indigenous knowledge systems for sustainable development and disaster management;
- alerting any relevant municipality to any hazard or calamity that threatens the area of jurisdiction of the traditional council in question, or the wellbeing of people living in such area of jurisdiction and contributing to disaster management in general;
- sharing information and cooperating with other traditional councils; and
- performing the functions conferred by customary law, customs and statutory law consistent with the Constitution.
The national and all provincial governments must in terms of Section 5 of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Amendment Act, 2003 (Act 41 of 2003), promote partnerships between municipalities and traditional councils through legislative or other measures. The provisions put forward in the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act, 2003 (Act 41 of 2003), are in line with the local government legal framework. This Act attempts to combine the strengths of various approaches within a model which is consistent with the Constitution and recognises the positive contribution that both elected structures and traditional authorities can make in the overall development of traditional areas and communities.

The Traditional Leadership and Government Framework Act, 2003 (Act 41 of 2003), ensure cooperation, communication and consultation between local government and traditional leaders and institutions. It is proposed, in accordance with the Constitution, that there will be elected local government in all the areas falling under traditional authorities. Traditional leadership should play a role closest to the people, and their role should therefore be defined principally in relation to category (b) municipalities, although larger kingdoms covering an entire district will require a similar relationship with district government (White Paper on Local Government, 1998:41).

According to Reddy (1995:65), the role of traditional authorities has usually been limited to culture, ceremonial or religious roles; dispute resolution and judicial functions in terms of customary law; and, importantly, land allocation. However, existing legislation (promulgated by the former homeland governments) which governs the operation of traditional authorities provides wide-ranging powers to traditional authorities, including those of a service delivery nature. The new local government dispensation, in particular the new concepts of developmental local government, has provided a great paradigm shift in the local sphere of government. Traditional leadership has now a clear role to play even at ward committee level in accordance with the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act. For example, in a traditional community where a traditional council had been established in terms of subsection 3(a) of section 4 of the Traditional Leadership and Governance
Framework Act, 2003 (Act 41 of 2003), a traditional council must cooperate with any relevant ward committee established in terms of section 73 of the Local Government Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998), and meet at least once year to give account of the activities and finances of the traditional council and levies received by the traditional council.

2.4.6 Conclusion

In concluding this chapter it is worth mentioning that ward committees are a prime instrument in government's objective for establishing participatory democracy – where citizens are actively involved in making decisions that will impact directly on their lives. Attention has been given to participatory democracy in developmental local government by focusing on the origin, nature and role of ward committees in local governance as well as the policy framework for public participation. The IDP, budget, performance management have been discussed as the tenets of public participation for ward committees. The last two sections had dealt with the gender mainstreaming and the relationship between ward committees and traditional leaders.
CHAPTER THREE

Research analysis and interpretation

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter attention will be given to the research methodology and techniques used in the study. This process will assist in addressing the problem statement. It will also attempt to address the main hypothesis as well as the sub hypothesis.

3.2 The research methodology

According to Thomas (2004:20) designing a research project is all about making decisions. This means that certain decisions must be made before the research process can begin. These range from broad, general decisions about what approach to adopt in order to tackle a particular topic, to narrow more specific decisions about what specific data to obtain, from where and how.

The most general decisions are those concerning research strategy. This outlines the broad procedure that will be used for the research process. Research strategies are rather like genres, indicating very broadly the style of the work, perhaps a survey, an experiment or a case study (Thomas, 2004:20).

Decisions about research methods involve choices of techniques of data construction and analysis. For example, a case study strategy might include interviews and observation, while a survey strategy would likely include a questionnaire. Both methods may use quantitative data, which is measurable;
According to Thomas (2004:20) the outcome of the research design process is an operational plan detailing each activity and its expected duration. The research design is therefore a detailed plan of the way in which the research process will be implemented. For example, where it will take place, how it will be done and the amount of time it will take. By considering these factors in detail, the research will have an objective, an understanding and a road map to guide the process.

Different methods of conducting the research were considered for this study. The quantitative research was found to be appropriate.

### 3.2.1 The quantitative research

Quantitative research is the numerical representation and manipulation of observations for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena that those observations reflect. It is used with the collection of statistics, based on real data, observations or questionnaires. Opinion surveys are a form of quantitative research in which respondents are asked a set of fixed questions and their responses are tallied. ([http://www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)).

According to Mouton and Marais (1990:155) the quantitative research is mainly concerned with numbers and data that are easily quantified. The most popular quantitative technique is the survey, often based on a large number of cases, where a broad overview of a market is required. Surveys can be administered by mail, telephone, face to face, or more recently by the Internet or world wide web. They usually take less time to complete by the respondent and most often require choosing between several responses rather than long verbal responses. For example, in market research, surveys often aim to understand a target market better by breaking down the sample by demographics ([http://www.asia market research.com](http://www.asia market research.com)).
According to Leedy (1993:142) the quantitative approach might be categorised as “cold”. It is impersonally experimental. Decisions are made with the coldness of a steel rule. Quantitative methodologies manipulate variables and control natural phenomena. They construct hypotheses and “test” them against the hard facts of reality. Of all quantitative hypotheses, the null hypothesis is perhaps the most often tested; “the researcher decides what factors or variables might cause certain results (causes and effects) and carries out tests to either support or reject the null hypothesis at some level of statistical probability. The whole process is cold, calculating, deductive logic-from the position of a hypothesis to supporting or not supporting it.

The aim of quantitative research is to determine how one thing (a variable) affects another in a population. Quantitative research designs are either descriptive (subjects measured once) or experimental (subjects measured before and after a treatment). It is imperative to mention that quantitative research is all about quantifying the relationships between variables.

Variables are things a researcher measures his/her subjects, which can be human, animals or cells. Variables can represent subject characteristics (e.g. weight, height, sex) the things a respondent is interested in (e.g. athletic performance, rate or injury) and variables representing the tuning of measurements and nature of any treatments subjects receive (e.g. before and after a real drug or a sham drug.

To qualify the relationship between these variables, and researchers use values of effect statistics such as the correlation coefficient, the difference between the means of something in two groups, or the relative frequency of something in two groups (http://www.sportsci.org). Once a methodology for the study has been outlined it is important to consider the techniques to be used in the study for data collection.
3.2.2 Data collection methods /techniques

According to Hysamen (1994:139) once decisions have been made as to a particular research design and on the operationalisation or measurement of variables, the research participants have to be found to carry out the research in terms of the chosen research design.

In order to measure properties, a research scholar must collect the units of analysis which are called the research data. All phenomena one observes or comes across through literature are not data. But data are those phenomena which have to be used in a particular research. So the collection of data is important for the researcher upon which much of the significance of the research work is based. Whatever type of data one may use in a research work, the first requirement for empirical research is a comprehensive knowledge of the literature on the subject in question.

According to Mouton (1996:67) data collection involves applying the measurement to the sample or cases selected for the investigation. “We must constantly remind ourselves that the human senses (our eyes, ears, and occasionally even our taste and touch) are our “first-order” measuring instruments if they are qualitative (ibid). On the basis of our visual auditory and tactile observations and perceptions, we begin to classify responses, people, actions and events.

However, because we aspire to truthful representations of the social world, we have to augment our observations by more reliable and valid measuring instruments, such as scales, questionnaires and observation schedules”. If properly constructed and validated such instruments assist in collecting data that are more likely to be reliable than they would be had instruments not been used.

During data collection, the researcher collects various kinds of empirical information or data, for instance, historical statistical or documentary data.
This is accomplished through various methods and techniques of observation such as document analysis, content analysis, interviewing and psychometric testing.

There are a number of methodological criteria that must be followed during the process of data collection. These include suspension of personal prejudices and biases, systematic and accurate recording of the observations, establishment of trust and rapport with the interviewee and creating optimal conditions in terms of location or setting for the collection of the data.

The outcome of the process is a set of data or empirical facts and the epistemological criterion is that of reliability. The aim is to produce reliable data. This means that if we were to use the same measures and hold the conditions under which the data are collected as constant as possible, we should get the same data from situation to situation. Reliability is hence synonymous with stability or consistency over time (Mouton, 1996-111).

This section introduces the data collection and measuring instruments that will be administered to participants or respondents. Relevant data will mainly be collected by means of a survey. A structured questionnaire will be designed for the survey and will be applied to 380 members of ward communities in respect of the two local municipalities under the study. This figure is inclusive of the ward councillors as chairpersons of these ward committees.

There will also be a need for small scale interviews with the municipal managers and speakers of both local municipalities as contact persons. This will be done through personal visits to conduct face to face interviews with the respective municipal managers and speakers. Ward councillors for each respective ward will be utilized as research assistants.

Telephonic interviews will be used in order to get feedback and give clarity in cases where there is uncertainty. Contact name lists of ward councillors for each ward will be obtained form both municipalities. This will assist in the
telephonic communication, clarification and follow-up to increase the response rate.

Once a decision has been made towards a particular research design and the research participants obtained to carry out the research, it becomes imperative to give attention to the strategy that will be used for understanding the field of study. According to Singleton et al (1988:7) among the social sciences there are four principal research strategies for understanding the world, viz, experiments, surveys, field research, and the use of available data. In this study the focus will be on survey research.

3.2.3 Survey research

The modern world is built on information and the most practical way to gather large quantities of information about human beings is through questionnaire surveys. Basically survey research involves asking questions of a large enough sample of people to give one a sense of the range of sentiments across the relevant group. The sample may be probability or non-probability, and the questions may be administered via an interview or a questionnaire. Both questionnaire and interviews can range from relatively unstructured and open-ended to quite formal, completed structured and closed–ended (Goldenberg 1992:295).

Singleton et al. (1988 10-11) concur with the above by saying “survey research involves the application of questionnaires and interviews to relatively large groups of people. One purpose of surveys is to identify the presence of certain characteristics among groups. For example, a survey might tell how many people at a college, or in an organisation, have voluntarily given blood, have done volunteer work for a charitable organisation or have contributed money to charities”.

According to Bekker (1988:16) survey research may also test specific hypotheses, but it usually has aims, at describing the characteristics of a
selected or prepared sample and evaluating the presence and effects of various factors. The purpose of survey research is to arrive at and convey some sense of the distribution of responses across the population (Goldenberg 1992:295). While questionnaires and interviews are often used in conjunction with other forms of research, a key feature of survey studies is that information is collected from part of a group in order to make generalisations about the whole group. However, such generalisations are hazardous unless careful procedures are followed in deciding who is to be included in the study (Singleton, 1988:10-11).

According to Bekker (1988:18) a survey often begins by identifying a number of individuals considered representative of the group to be studied (what is referred to as a sample) and by deciding what questions they should be asked. Surveys can be used to test accepted explanations or theories and to develop new ones. They can lend support to a theory by indicating that a relationship that is postulated actively occurs among the group studied, or they can throw doubt on the applicability of a theory by offering little evidence that the relationship suggested by the theory actually exists.

Fundamentally, surveys simply refer to the research conducted in which one gathers data by asking respondents questions rather than by manipulating some feature of their environment, observing their behaviour, making inferences from indirect indicators or participating in their daily lives (Goldenberg 1992:295). Thus, according to Bekker (1988:16) a survey researcher has a carefully designed set of questions (questionnaire), and a specific group of individuals to be studied in order to find out what the researcher is trying to learn. The survey researcher must be highly organised, matter-of-fact, and impersonal when collecting the answers, combining (or aggregating) the answer from the entire sample and analysing the findings.

According to Goldenberg (1992:299), in survey research we are interested in patterns. If we gather our data through intensive interviewing or through structured questionnaires, we are still interested in the patterns displayed by our respondents. Whether we discover these patterns through transformation
of the data into coded form that can be dealt with statistically or whether we try to read the open-ended materials so often that patterns slowly emerge, we are still after patterns. Patterns are crucial to the scientific treatment of the data, and we have to defend our claims to have discovered such patterns. Statistical treatment simply allows us to simplify the data so as to more easily summarise a great volume in a manageable manner.

In the following section the focus will be on questionnaires as a research technique used for the survey to collect the data for the study.

3.2.3.1 Questionnaires

Data sometimes may be buried deep within the minds, attitudes, feelings, or reactions of men and women. It is strongly felt that in line with the latter statement the following metaphor is appropriate: “as with oil beneath the sea, the first problem is to devise a tool to probe below the surface. A commonplace instrument for observing data beyond the physical reach of the observer is the questionnaire. The questionnaire may be sent to people thousands of miles away, whom the researcher may never see” (Leedy, 1993:187).

According to Huysamen (1994:128) survey questionnaires may be used to obtain the following kinds of information from respondents: biographical particulars (their age, educational qualifications, income etc) typical behaviour (which brand of toothpaste they use or which television programmes they favour, etc), opinions, beliefs and convictions (about any topic or issue, e.g. the present state of the economy), and attitudes (e.g. towards affirmative action). However, attitudes should preferably be assessed by means of attitude scales rather than survey questionnaires.

There are many possible ways of gathering information directly from participants if such information cannot be obtained by observation. (Bless and Higson-Smith, 1995:104). One of the ways is the questionnaire. Because questionnaires represent a common and concrete illustration of the operationalisation process, they are a fit method for completing the general
examination. Several general guidelines can help frame and ask questions that serve as an excellent operationalisation of variables (Babbie, 1998:147).

Though the term questionnaire suggests a collection of questions, an examination of a typical questionnaire will probably reveal as many statements as questions. This is not without reason. Often, the researcher is interested in determining the extent to which respondents hold a particular attitude or perspective. This is the technique that is to be followed in the study. For example, if one can summarise the attitude in a fairly brief statement, one can present that statement and ask respondents whether they agree, or disagree with it. Rensis Likert has greatly formalised this procedure though the creation of the Likert scale, a format in which respondents are asked to strongly agree, disagree or strongly disagree, or perhaps strongly approve, approve, disapprove or strongly disapprove (Babbie, 1998:147-148).

Huysamen (1994:124-127) with regard to the above, refers to attitude scales. Personality traits and interests are conceptualised as attributes which are manifested in a variety of situations and which are relatively permanent. An attitude, by contrast, is a disposition towards a particular issue, the so called attitudinal object, which may be influenced by other individuals and events and is thus less permanent than personality traits. The attitudinal object may refer to particular social issues (e.g. abortion, the position of Afrikaans in a new governmental dispensation) an institution (e.g. sport on Sundays), and a group (e.g. the AWB) or even a single person. According to Hysamen (1994:124-127), there are different types of attitudes scales, all of which are composed of sets of items which are supposed to measure different degrees of the attitudes towards the attitudinal object. These are based on different assumptions about the relationship between individual’s attitudes and their responses to the items. Summated or Likert scales consist of a collection of statements about the attitudinal object. In respect of each statement subjects have to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreements with its contention on a five point scale (e.g. strongly agree, agree undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree.). Same statements represent a positive
attitude, whereas others reflect negative attitudes (towards the attitudinal object).

The questionnaire is a totally impersonal probe. Because of this impersonality associated with the questionnaire, researchers need to be governed by several practical guidelines when employing it as a tool in survey research (Leedy, 1993:187). Welman and Kruger (2001:165) talk of several considerations that researchers should bear in mind when formulating questions for such instruments. Some of these considerations are more important when options and beliefs are assessed than when information about biographical details and typical behaviour is to be collected. Some of these practical guidelines will be briefly outlined.

According to Leedy (1993:187) the questionnaire language must be unmistakably clear. Communications is a deceptive skill. What may be crystal clear to one may be meaningless jargon to another person. For example, take a very simple question. “How many cigarettes do you smoke each day?” That seems to be a clear and unambiguous question, especially if we accompany it with certain choices so that all the respondent has to do is to check one of them.

In Welman and Kruger (2001:165) the consideration is to choose judiciously between open-ended and closed–ended (multiple-choice) variety questions. Questions in questionnaires can be made open-ended so that respondents have to formulate their responses themselves. Questions can also be presented as multiple-choice questions, where respondents have to select, from among two or more alternative responses, the one that best applies to them.

According to Babbie (1998:148), in asking questions, researchers have two options. They may ask open-ended questions, in which case the respondent is asked to provide his or her own answers to the questions. In the other case, closed–ended questions (which have been used for this study), the respondent is asked to select an answer from a list provided by the
researcher. Closed-ended questions are very popular because they provide a greater uniformity of responses and are more easily processed. Open-ended questions must be coded before they can be processed for computer analysis. This coding process often requires that the researcher interpret the meaning of responses, opening the possibility of misunderstanding and research bias. Closed-ended responses can often be transferred directly into a computer format.

Questionnaires should be designed to fulfill a specific research objective. Many questionnaires are so inexpertly written that they bear the hallmarks of a quick, effortless attempt “to gather data” that “may be helpful” in solving the research problem. Aimless, haphazard thinking and careless, imprecise expression are the most commonplace faults in constructing questionnaires. The lack of design and precision of expression may also account for the small return of questionnaires when they are sent to a given population. (Leedy, 1993:188). Another consideration is to be careful not to offend.

Researchers should not only avoid technical terms, but also terms that might offend the respondents. One other practical guideline is to be brief and focused. Preference should be given to questions that are concise (brief and to the point) without being ambiguous (having more than one meaning). The longer a question, the longer it takes to read and the greater the possibility that it may create resistance in the respondent (Welman and Kruger 2001:167).

According to Babbie (1998:149) the researcher must avoid double-barreled questions. Frequently, researchers ask respondents for a single answer to a combination of questions. That seems to happen most often when the researcher has personally identified with a complex question. For example, respondents might be asked to agree or disagree with a specific statement.

Another consideration is that questions should be relevant to most respondents. When attitudes are requested on a topic that few respondents have thought about or really cared about, the results are not likely to be very
careful. Of course, because the respondents may express attitudes even though they have never given any thought to the issue, the researcher runs the risk of being misled (Babbie, 1998:151).

One other practical guideline is to take the respondents’ literacy level into consideration. When researchers formulate the questions, they should use words and concepts with which they can expect the respondents to be familiar. The command of language of the group that is investigated should therefore be taken into account. Researchers always obviously want to obtain accurate information from the respondents, it stands to reason that they should know exactly what is being asked of them (Welman and Kruger, 2001:167).

According to Leedy (1993:190), questionnaires succeed if their success is planned. One researcher who conducted a particularly successful questionnaire study handled it this way: After selecting her population, she sent to each person a letter describing the potential value of the study. The letter emphasised the importance of the study to the addressee, and it invited the addressee to cooperate by answering the questionnaire. Leedy (1993:190) also puts emphasis on the importance of the initial letter. It should be carefully and thoughtfully structured, and it should stress the concerns of the person receiving the letter rather than the selfish interests of the sender. Some researchers forget this and in so doing betray their own self-centeredness.

There are a lot more issues for consideration in dealing with survey questionnaires. It is now time to briefly outline the relevant questionnaire technique for the study.

3.2.3.2 Self-administered questionnaires

There are three methods of administering survey questionnaires to a sample of respondents. Taking cognisance of the expected low level of literacy in the majority of the sample population, this section will deal with the method in which respondents are asked to complete the questionnaires themselves.
i.e. the self-administered questionnaires (Babbie, 1998:257). According to Babbie and Mouton (2003:258), self-administered questionnaires are only appropriate when the population under study is adequately literate. However, this condition cannot always hinder investigation, in particular in South Africa for the simple reason that the population under which the study is conducted is always of a low literacy level because of the imbalances of the past.

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:105) questionnaires can be used without any direct personal contact with the respondents. These are self-administered questionnaires, and are completed by the respondents themselves without the assistance of an interviewer. This can be done either by distributing the questionnaire and collecting it once it has been filled out, or by mailing it and asking respondents to send it back. It is then called a mail questionnaire, which is definitely a non-personal method of gathering data.

The most important advantage to using a mail questionnaire is that a large coverage of the population can be realised with little time or cost. For example, it is relatively easy to select 2000 or even 500 people in different areas of a country and send them questionnaires by mail. The major disadvantage of self-administered questionnaires is the low response rate. This is common particularly in developing countries because of high illiteracy levels.

Occasionally the site of a self-administered interview is a school or organisation, where the questionnaire may be hand-delivered and filled out in a group or individually. This is the least expensive of the three survey methods, even though the budget for printing and postage must be sufficiently high to permit follow-up mailings. No interviewers or interview supervisors are needed, there are no travel or telephone expenses, and very little office space is required (Singleton, 1988:247).

For the purpose and the nature of the study, it must be mentioned that personal visits and communications by telephone was used. The sample population was visited through the help of the relevant local municipal offices.
as the contact centres. Obviously personal visits are less costly although communication by telephone may be expensive (Welman and Kruger, 2001:158).

It will be not wise to talk of survey questionnaires and not refer to research ethics or ethical considerations that must be taken into account as the sampled population is formed by human subjects.

3.3 Research ethics

The previous sections have dealt with the technical side of social research, with issues of research methodology up to data collection techniques. Besides these technical aspects, there is another dimension to the social science that must be considered i.e. the moral dimension. When researchers think about how to conduct research, they must think not only of using the right techniques they have learned. They must think about research ethics (Singleton 1998:144).

There are some vital non-scientific concerns that shape the activities of social researchers. These are the ethical considerations that must be kept in mind as the researcher learns the logic and techniques of social research (Babbie, 1998:38).

According to Babbie and Mouton (2003:520), an ethical issue arises out of our interaction with other people, other beings (such as animals) and the environment especially where there is potential for, or is, a conflict of interests. The scientist has the right to the search for truth but not at the expense of the rights of other individuals. For example, researchers have the right to collect data by interviewing people but not at the expense of the interviewees’ right to privacy.

Just as practical considerations can prevent researchers from implementing research design or obtaining as large or diverse a sample as possible, so too can ethical considerations constrain scientific enquiry. Ethics may prohibit
researchers from using experimental treatments that could harm research participants, from asking questions that would prove extremely embarrassing or threatening, from making observations that would deceive or place subjects under duress, and from reporting information that would constitute an invasion of privacy. In addition, researchers are expected to be completely honest in observing, analysing, and reporting findings, and to be responsible about the limits and application of scientific knowledge (Singleton, 1988:444). Some of the ethical considerations will be briefly outlined.

3.3.1 No harm to subjects

The foremost ethical rule of social research is that it brings no harm to research subjects. Social researchers do not intend to hurt people, but they can cause inadvertent harm if they are not careful. If one revealed damaging information about the interviewed, one would have violated this ethical rule (Babbie, 1998:38). Social research should never injure the people being studied, regardless of whether they volunteer for the study or not (Babbie and Mouton 2001:522).

3.3.2 Informed consent

According to Singleton (1998:448), another ethical issue arises from the value placed on freedom of choice in Western societies. For moral and legal reasons, subjects should not be coerced into participating in social research. Not only must subjects understand that their participation is voluntary but they must be given enough information about the research to make an informed decision about whether to participate. In other words, researchers should obtain the explicit or implicit informed consent of their subjects to take part in an investigation.

According to Terreblanche and Durrheim (1999:66) obtaining consent from participants is not merely the signing of a consent form. Consent should be voluntary and informed. This requires that participants receive a full, non-technical and clear explanation of tasks expected of them so that they can make an informed choice to participate voluntarily in the research.
3.3.3 Privacy and voluntary participation

Social research often invades a person’s privacy. An interviewer may want information of a private nature or a scientist may need to observe people in situations harmful or at least uncomfortable to the participants. People should not be subjected to research of such a nature unless they agree to it. Participation in research should be voluntary and people can refuse to divulge certain information about them. This right to privacy demands that direct consent for participation must be obtained from adults and, in the case of children, from their parents or guardians. Moreover this consent must be informed, in the sense that participants must be aware of the positive or negative aspects or consequences of participation. The research may involve stress, discomfort or even harm to the participants which they may not be prepared to tolerate. On the other hand, their suffering may lead to positive and more general social benefits, thus by explaining positive and negative aspects, cooperation can be assured (Bless and Higson-Smith, 1995:100).

3.3.4 Deception

According to Singleton (1988:451), deception in some ways is the most controversial ethical consideration. On the one hand, it is a widely used and accepted practice in social research, especially in experiments. The most common deception involves misleading subjects or respondents about the purpose of the study. For example, a cover letter for a survey might indicate that the study’s objective is to examine general beliefs about health when, in fact, the investigators are interested specifically in their respondents’ knowledge of and beliefs about the relationship between smoking and lung cancer. The handling of subjects’ identities is an important ethical consideration (Babbie and Mouton, 2003:525).
3.3.5 Anonymity and confidentiality

According to Babbie and Mouton (2003:523) the clearest concern in the protection of subjects’ interests and their wellbeing is the protection of their identity, especially in survey research. If revealing their survey responses would injure them in any way, adherence to this norm becomes all the more important. The two techniques of anonymity and confidentiality assist the researcher in this regard. A respondent may be considered anonymous when the researcher cannot identify a given response with a given respondent.

In a confidential survey, the research can identify a given persons’ responses but essentially promises not to do so publicly. In an interview survey, for example, the researcher would be in a position to make public the income reported by a given respondent, but the respondent is assured that this will not be done.

The decision has already been taken about what methods and techniques are going to be applied in this study. The next section will outline briefly how the data received will be interpreted.

3.4 Data analysis and interpretation

Data are analysed by identifying patterns in the data and drawing conclusions from them. The outcome of the analysis or interpretation is certain conclusions which must follow logically from the empirical evidence if they are to be regarded as valid results or conclusions. The following section will interpret the data as recorded in the responses received from the respondents.

3.4.1 Findings

According to information received from the municipal managers of the Intsika Yethu and Engcobo local municipalities, for the involvement and effective participation of ward committees in local governance, service delivery, IDP
and budget processes, steps that are followed are: (1) issue an official invitation to ward committees [and other governance structures like traditional leadership, women’s forum, etc.] to a meeting with councilors delivered by ward councilors or through the print media or radio stations; (2) organize *imbizos* with ward committees and communities to enable ward committee and community members to dialogue with municipal partisan and senior non-partisan official on matters of governance, in particular, IDP formulation and review, and budget formulation. Feedback from ward committee and committee members are then considered and documentations are reviewed so as to ensure that the [local] municipalities are people- and development-centered.

At the time of conducting this investigation it was not clear how this should be undertaken. An assumption to be made will be that if these visits are not conducted in terms of a ward-to-ward visit approach, the process may not necessarily be all-inclusive. Another handicap is the use of the local newspapers when taking cognisance of the level of illiteracy among the members of the relevant communities. Even for those who could read and write, it could be difficult to access the newspaper as they reside in remote rural areas, where the newspaper (Daily Dispatch) is not available.

Three hundred and eighty (380) questionnaires were administered to thirty-five ward committees, namely twenty-three (23) and fifteen (15) ward committees for Intsika Yethu and Engcobo local municipalities respectively for completion by ward committee members as the chosen units of analysis. Each ward committee consists of 10 members. Out of the total figure of 380 questionnaires, two hundred and sixty-seven (267) responses have been received. This forms more than seventy percent (70.3%) of the total figure. Various reasons have been observed for the failure to reach one hundred percent responses. Among others being the fact that some ward committee members have passed away and have not been replaced by the time of conducting the study. Another shocking reason as observed from the comments from one of the responses is that many ward committee members have just stopped doing ward committee work as they are not being paid. This
indicates that the concept of volunteering is not understood by such members. The questionnaire had three sections, addressing the following components:

3.4.2 Biographical information

(a) Gender
Out of the 267 responses the observations made are that 142 are males and 121 are females which constitute 53% and 45% respectively while 2% of respondents have not indicated their gender. This means that males are in majority and the two local municipalities have to recruit more females to participate in ward committee structures and municipal governance. In addition, the 50/50 male and female ratio as required in terms of Project Consolidate is not yet achieved by the municipalities.

(b) Age
In terms of age the majority of ward committee members are between the ages of 40-49 followed by the ages 30-39 and 50-59 with 11% and 12%, and between the ages of 20-29 and sixty and above respectively while one percent have not indicated their ages.

(c) Language
The 98% of the respondents speak Xhosa as their mother tongue and use the same language as medium of communication in meetings, and 2% of the respondents did not indicate their home language.

(d) Marital Status
The majority of ward committee members are married (60%) and 35% of the respondents are single with only 3% divorced. Only 2% of the respondents who did not indicate their marital status.
(e) Racial background

The racial background is requested for information purposes only, and must also be considered as an attempt to assess whether the demographics of the area have changed since 1994. However, the results of the survey shows that the demographics in terms of race and language have not changed much since the new government emerged in 1994. Quantitatively, the study has also shown that 98% of the respondents in terms of race are black, and 2% have not indicated their race. This is true as the majority of the local inhabitants of the area are Africans.

(f) Employment status

In terms employment status the majority of the ward committee members are unemployed, that is, 62%. Ironically, 25% of the respondents are employed although the majority of this category is employed on a part-time (i.e. 14% and 11% full-time employed). In addition, pensioners constitute 13% of the total number of respondents.

(g) Educational information

The responses from the respondents show that the majority (55%) have no matriculation certificates. Only 19% of the respondents have pass matriculation exams, and those that have diplomas constitutes 7% and those with degrees make 5% of the total number of respondents. However, 14% of the respondents did not respond on the question which could be because they did not understand the question or have no education at all.

(h) Disability status

The majority (84%) of our respondents indicated that they have good health with no disability whereas 14% indicated to have disability, and 2% showed no response. Of note is the fact that most of the questions asked have a no
response rate which could mean that some respondents did not understand the questionnaire or the question.

3.4.3 General questions

All the tables providing the figures as explained in this section can be viewed at annexure D. The general questions were aimed at understanding the views of ward committee members in as far as the issue of receiving payment to encourage them to do their work, their understanding of the local government affairs and the South African politics. In this regard, 88% of the respondents were in favour of the [local] government to provide incentives in a form of wages on a monthly basis to enable them to pay for their transport fees and other necessities. They also cited the rate of unemployment as the reason to favour support from [local] government. However, 5% of the respondents disagreed and 2% remained neutral. It is assumed that these respondents are employed somewhere, and may be the incentives would not bring much changes in their standard of living in particular those who remained neutral. In addition, 5% of the 267 respondents did not respond on the question.

Active participation in party politics has been cited as common to the respondents with 83% of the respondents agreeing to be members of political organisations and support the view that ward committee members be political active. With 3% of the respondents maintaining a different view or [strongly] disagreed with a view that ward committees should be active in party politics as that might influence the manner in which ward committee functions and might suffer from political ‘hijacking’. Although there are a certain number of respondents who [strongly] disagree with the above view, the number of those respondents who were undecided or neutral was more by 6%, which is 9%. May be the 9% is constituted by those respondents who are pensioners and some coming from the old system of headmanship who view that development by ward committees must benefit people regardless of political and religious affiliations. Five percent (5%) of the respondents did not respond to the question.
3.4.4 Challenges faced by ward committees

The responses received from the questionnaires indicate that almost all ward committee members [strongly (58%)] agree (30%) that they are faced with many challenges that limit their potential and abilities to deliver on their constitutional mandates. They have indicated that it was their first time when developmental local government and ward committee were established in 2000 and 2002 respectively to deal with matters of local governance and community developmental programmes. Four [4%] percent of the respondents disagree with the view that there are challenges to ward committee systems of the local municipalities of Intsika Yethu and Engcobo. However, 5% of the respondents remained neutral and 4% did not respond to the question. The argument of the study that there are challenges facing the ward committees of the above mentioned local municipalities is considered to be confirmed by the respondents as 88% [strongly] agreed. The challenges facing ward committees are mentioned and described in chapter one of the study and possible solutions are discussed in chapters 4 and 5 respectively.

It is considered important for the two local councils to provide support to ward committees so as to enable them to overcome these challenges and begin to be more responsive, responsible and respected ward committees amongst the communities they were established to assist. The question whether the support they receive from councils enables them to overcome these challenges was asked and the response was as follows: 50% of the responses indicated yes they get the necessary council support from councils, 23% feel that they get less support, and 21% indicate they are not getting any support from council. With 3% of the respondents indicate that they do not know whether the councils are providing [enough] support for professional functioning of the ward committees or not. Lastly, 3% of the respondents did not respond to the question.
3.4.5 Roles, powers and functions of ward committees

It is considered important for all members of the ward committees to be inducted to their work so that they can understand what is required of them to deliver on their mandates effectively and efficiently. In this regard knowledge of roles, powers, and functions of ward committees is considered vital to be known by all of them, ward and PR councillors and members of communities. A question to determine their level of and importance of them knowing their roles, exercising of powers and function performance was asked. The response was: 72% of the respondents [strongly] agreed that they understand how to perform their roles and functions, and exercise their powers for the better of their communities. However, 17% of the respondents partly agreed or remained undecided to tell whether they understand their roles, powers and functions or not. Those who disagreed form only 6% of the total number of respondents. Again, 5% of the respondents did not respond to the question.

As 72% of the respondents agreed to know how to carry out their functions, it is because of the training and development opportunities that were opened to ward committees by the local municipalities. In the context of capacity building 68% of the respondents agreed to have been trained in various areas of [local] ward committee governance matters and service delivery programmes hence the better understanding of the roles, powers and functions. Only 17% of the respondents felt that the training has less equipped them to effectively respond to the needs of people and in making the ward committee structures more responsive, responsible and respected by both the council and communities. Eleven percent (11%) indicated that they were not trained hence some of them do not understand their roles, powers and functions. In addition, 4% of the respondents did not respond to the question.
3.4.6 Community participation in developmental local government affairs through council, ward councillor and ward committees

Although there are mixed responses on how ward committees should participate in local government affairs, the majority of the respondents (33%) indicated that the communities participate in local government affairs through the ward councillor as he/she has a budget and direct link to the council, and 30% indicated that community should participate through the ward committee systems as the ward councillor chairs the meetings of ward committees. With 17% remained neutral on the matter, and 15% feel that communities must participate through council as the highest decision making body of the municipality. Only 5% of non-responses were received.

With regard to developmental local government which is defined as a local government which is development-orientated and people-centred the showed understanding of the concept. This means that developmental local government is local government of the people for the people by the people. The community participation is considered as one of the most important pillars of democratic developmental local government. Eighty-seven (87%) of the respondents share the same sentiments, with only 2% of the respondents disagreed with the above view. However, 8% of the respondents remained neutral and 3% did not respond to the question.

3.4.7 Integrated development planning

The involvement of ward committee members in the development, implementation and review of municipal IDPs is considered to be one of the most important areas in participation. IDP is a document that is considered to be the ‘bible’ of the municipality which delivers on the needs and demands of the local communities. Off note is that ward committees must not just participate, but must know what the IDP is all about, and how it is formulated, implemented, reviewed and monitored so that they can make a significant contribution. The response on this question is as follows: 82% of the
respondents agree that ward committees must be one of the important stakeholders in the formulation, implementation, review and monitoring of the IDPs, with only 9% of the respondents against the above view. Out of the remaining respondents, 5% remained neutral and 4% did not respond on the question.

3.4.8 Performance management of the council

The second area of participation identified in this research is performance management. The argument, in this regard is, now that the ward committee members are participating in the affairs of local government and have an accountability responsibility to the communities, together with communities, they must participate in the management or monitoring of the performance of the municipality, in particular the council. The response from the respondents on performance management stand as follows: 60% agree that ward committees must be involved in the formulation, management and monitoring of the performance [systems for] of the local council, 27% disagree and feel that ward committees have no capacity to effectively contribute to the development and monitoring of performance management of the local councils, 10% remained neutral, and lastly 3% did not respond to the question.

3.4.9 Budgeting issues

The third area identified in which ward committees could make a significant contribution is municipal budgeting. Off note is that the IDP and budgeting are considered to be two important legislative requirements for ward committees and communities to participate in their formulation, implementation and review. The respondents responded as follows: 64% agreed that they fully understand the impact of their participation in municipal budgets and understand how municipal budgets are formulated, implemented and reviewed. There are those 14% who understand some areas [not the whole
process] of municipal budgeting, and 18% do not understand at all how municipal budgeting is developed, adopted, implemented and reviewed. The argument of this group is that municipal budgeting is none of the business of ward committees. It is suggested that municipal officials under the leadership of the Chief Financial Officer must train ward committees on financial management and the enforcement of relevant financial legislations such as Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act 56 of 2003), and Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999). Lastly, 4% of the respondents did not respond to the question.

### 3.4.10 Ward committees and the regulatory framework

The establishment of ward committee is a constitutional requirement. It is considered important for them to understand and comply with all legislations that are relevant [and would enable] them [to] perform better their functions. In this regard 66% of the respondents indicated that they understand the legislative framework for developmental local government, and 18% indicated that they do not understand and would appreciate if they can be capacitated on this area. However, 11% of the respondents remain neutral, and 5% of the respondents did not respond to the question.

### 3.4.11 Gender issues

Participation by women at ward committees is a provision of the laws governing local government. It has been observed from the responses received that women fully participate in ward committees with 79% indicating that women of all ages do participate in the affairs of ward committees and local government. In addition, women of all races have a more important role to play in the development of communities. However, 9% of the respondents would appreciate to see more of women participating as they indicate that women in these two local municipalities participate, but on an ad hoc basis (i.e. to a lesser extent). However, the response shows that 5% of the respondents feel no need of women to participate in ward committees and
men can perform better of all the roles that ward committees are performing. Lastly, 7% of the respondents did not respond.

3.4.12 Relationship between ward committees and traditional leaders

The view is that a sustainable relationship between the ward committees and traditional leaders should be built. It was noted from the responses that some members of traditional authorities feel that the ward councillors and ward committees are taking their jobs and that is making them ceremonial figures in their communities. In this context, 41% of the responses showed that traditional leaders must be part of ward committees while 35% say the opposite. Some of the respondents, 7% to be specific feel that traditional leadership are partly part of ward committees as they stand chances like all people to be appointed to serve on the structures. The second view of these respondents is that if not appointed they can attend [all] meetings and be observers. However, 7% of the respondents see no need of the involvement of traditional leaders as they might stifle the progress and participation by young people in ward committee affairs. The view is that traditional leaders are people of an ‘old school’ and the ward committee might ‘get into existing conflict between the traditional leaders and councillors’. However, 5% of the respondents remained neutral, and the remaining 5% did not respond to the question.

3.4.13 Capacity building

Capacity building has proved to be the major challenge facing ward committees. The majority of the respondents at 64% strongly agree that training must be provided to ward committees, and 30% of the respondents agree with the view which gives a total of 94% of the respondents who agreed that ward committees need continuous capacity development through training so as to keep up with the ever changing environment of local government. The training must be on-the-job training and off-the-job training. Only 5% of the respondents did not respond while 1% remained neutral.
The view that training must be provided to ward committees is supported by an argument that the local municipalities must provide resources such as funding and accredited facilitators as ward committees have no access to the above resources. There is 93% of the respondents who support the above view, with 4% of the respondents who remained neutral, and 3% disagreed with the above view stating that the local business sector must contribute together with provincial and national spheres of government.

3.5 Conclusion

In conclusion it is worth mentioning that the study has been conducted in quantitative research making use of data collection methods/techniques in survey research such as general questionnaires and self-administered questionnaires. The chapter has also taken into account ethical issues that must be considered when doing research involving human beings, namely, no harm to subjects, informed consent, privacy and voluntary participation, deception, anonymity and confidentiality. Upon analysing and interpreting data the findings were, among other things, that ward committees understand their role, powers and functions in as far as IDP, budget and performance management. It has also been observed that traditional leaders, women and the youth play an important key role at ward committee level.
CHAPTER FOUR

Strategies to improve the performance of ward committees

4.1 Introduction

Having an outline of the research methodology and the specific methods and techniques that have been applied in the field of study, which have been the subject matter in the previous chapter, it is felt necessary, in this chapter to consider the strategies that should be used in order to improve the performance of ward committees.

Firstly, attention will be given to the involvement of ward committees in the strategic planning process of their respective local councils. Secondly, the monitoring and evaluation of the activities of ward committees should be another area of focus. Thirdly, a closer look should be at the remuneration of ward councillors and ward committee members. Fourthly, should be given to the empowerment of ward committee members through programmes such as the Adult Based Education and Training (ABET) and the effective involvement of the women and the youth in community-based projects (RDP). Lastly, another strategy should be to consider and/or encourage the establishment of local ward advisory councils or committees.

4.2 The strategic planning process

The object of ward committees is to enhance participatory democracy (Hydenrych, 2004:4). In order to improve the performance of ward committees it is felt that their effective involvement in the strategic planning process of their respective local councils is critical. Such involvement would also enable ward committees to assume their huge responsibilities more easily. It should be noted that planning is a basic management function which helps
institutions to keep up with change and which can be used to determine in advance what the institution should achieve.

Plans are usually prepared to give guidelines to managers for what they are going to do in the department (van der Waldt and du Toit, 1997:181). Putting this statement in a proper perspective with regard to the ward committees, it is viewed that local municipal councils should not only involve ward committees, in the strategic planning process. The ward committee members themselves should be the major stakeholders in such a process. They would attach great importance to the council and feel that they are being cared for by being involved. This alone, will improve the performance of ward committees.

According to Smit and Crinje (1992:88 in van der Waldt and du Toit, 1997: 181- 182), planning is a basic process involving every manager. The purpose of planning is to facilitate the achievement of an institution’s purpose, mission and objectives. The period for which plans are prepared the so-called “planning horizon” can be short-term (1 to 12 months), medium-term (1 to 5 years) or long-term (more than 5 years). However, the period is not rigid, because certain circumstances can change situations.

Planning is therefore aimed at determining future circumstances and identifying the measures needed to realise them. It has to do with the choice of alternatives. In order for this to happen it is an important view that the municipal managers, the speakers and mayors of the local municipalities should be people who are capable and competent to understand and take such initiatives. This will not only improve the performance of the ward committees but also that of the local councils themselves and service delivery will be enhanced.

Strategic planning is a tool of strategic management and forms an important component of it. It enables public managers to evaluate, select and implement alternatives for rendering effective service (Mecer, 1991:20 in van der Waldt and du Toit, 1997:285). The effective utilisation of strategic planning and management causes better utilisation of the states' resources. The main
The purpose of strategic planning is to improve productivity and the effectiveness of an institution by analysing the community’s needs, formulating institutional objectives and identifying steps to achieve these objectives.

Strategic planning involves establishing the direction of the institution, such as the goal and mission, most important clients and role-players, barriers to overcome and alternatives for rendering services (van der Waldt and du Toit, 1997: 285-286). The outcome of the strategic planning of municipalities should be the integrated development planning (IDP) which must also include the budget process. Currently ward committees participate in this process through their ward councillor who also chairs the ward committee. What is advocated here is the effective involvement of ward committees through their members in the IDP process. The IDP as the strategic planning process of the municipalities should be tailor-made to accommodate the ward committees, i.e. in terms of their level of understanding and their community needs. In order to improve the productivity of ward committees ward councillors should assume the responsibility of being managers, so that they can guide and give direction to the ward committee members with regard to the strategic planning process. Through such thinking ward committees could contribute directly to the strategic planning process and their performance would improve.

The following scenario can be used as a mechanism that can be utilised in the strategic planning process of municipalities in order to improve the performance of ward committees. Objectives would be set around:

- Ward committees to appear as critical priority objective in the municipal strategic planning process.
- the introduction of awards for ward committees to compete against each other in the area. Competition always brings enthusiasm among people. This may be, called: “Mayor’s ward committee awards” and be sponsored by the council. Ward committees would be encouraged to participate in the awards competition.
• separate strategic planning sessions for ward committees are suggested. Although this may require massive resource utilisation, it will cover more ground in terms of improving the performance of ward committees in the long term.

• training for purposes of participating in the development of IDP, annual budgets, reconstruction and development programme (RDP) and LED of other relevant municipal governance programmes. Training directed towards the effective involvement of ward committees in the national government programmes such the extended public works programme (EPWP) and provincial government programme such as the PGDP.

• alignment of ward committees with the community development workers (CDWs). A close link with this concept is necessary as the (CDWs) are comprehensively trained on community based matters.

• ward committee focus on the provincial growth and development programme (PGDP). This will bring awareness on the issue of making sure that municipal performances have positive spin offs on achievement of PGDP targets.

• committing ward councilors to do council work only and not be part-time because they have other duties they are employed for.

It is envisaged that once these are among the objectives of the municipality ward committee members would feel empowered and consider it necessary to work with the municipality to achieve municipal objectives as provided for in the Constitution and IDPs. Once they are encouraged by such participation their performance will improve at the ward level.

It is also necessary to check whether ward committees are achieving the objectives for which they were established. The following section will deal with the monitoring and evaluation of ward committees as a tool to improve their performance.
4.3 Monitoring and evaluation of ward committees

The point of departure is to determine whether the monitoring and evaluation of the activities of ward committees exists or not. If it is available the question would be: Who is responsible for such a process? But of more importance is the fact that it is felt if the actions of ward committees are monitored and evaluated, this should improve their performance. When ward committee members are exposed to the constant guidelines and direction this would be a good reason for them to pull up their socks and commit themselves to ward committee activities and work. This entails a monitoring and evaluation system that must be in place. According to Ceasar (1999:52) this system must be part of an annual planning and budgeting process. It must be used to improve the performance of ward committees and must also serve as a yardstick to identify and rectify any shortcomings.

Ongoing monitoring provides an opportunity to check how well team members are meeting predetermined standards and to make changes to unrealistic or problematic standards. And, by monitoring continually, project managers can identify unacceptable performance at any time during the appraisal period, and provide assistance to address such performance rather than wait until the end of the period (Knipe et al. 2002:240). Aligning this with the improvement of the performance of ward committees, it is clear that with constant monitoring and evaluation their performance would improve.

On the element of evaluation, Ceasar (1999:53) writes that evaluation is that part of the planning process which assesses the value of the implemented strategy. It measures whether and to what extent the development goals are being achieved. It is concerned with the assessment of the medium to long-term goals and measures project outcomes in terms of quality of life of the community. Baum and Tolbert 1985 in (Nel, 2004:62) state that an important purpose of project evaluation is to determine the reasons for the apparent success or failure of a particular project. In this way, it is possible to pinpoint
features that deserve replication in future projects and to identify the pitfalls to be avoided. Therefore, the primary aim of evaluating a project is to learn from experience so that what is planned for the future is better than what went before. If a proper monitoring and evaluation strategy is put in place the performance of ward committees is bound to improve.

4.4 Remuneration of ward committees

Currently the ward committee work is voluntary. The principle of voluntarism is well understood and well endorsed by most ward committee members (McIntosh, 2004:10). In terms of section 167(1) of the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act 56 of 2003), a municipal council may remunerate its political office bearers and members of its political structures, but only within the framework of the Public Office Bearers Act, 1998 (Act 20 of 1998) and in accordance with section 219 (4) of the Republic of South Africa Constitution Act, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996).

In terms of section 77 of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998) no remuneration is to be paid to ward committee members. This is a matter that needs the attention of government. Municipalities may annually budget for out-of-pocket expenses of ward committee members in respect of their participation in ward committees. The municipal council must determine the criteria for, and calculation of out-of-pocket expenses referred to above (DPLG, 2004:17). It is felt that the principle of voluntarism has been well accepted by communities as they perform ward activities without any complaints. Currently ward committee members are reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses in the form of allowances for attending meetings.

It will be appropriate for municipalities to increase the budget for such allowances. Another scenario should be to standardise the meetings which ward committees must hold in a year. For example, a municipal council may decide that ward committee meetings should be held every two months. The

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frequency of the meeting coupled with the discretion to increase the tariffs for allowances may prove to be motivational. Alternatively, the council must consider a flat rate of, for instance, between R500.00 to R700.00 per month to compensate for community work done by ward committee members. This will be far less when compared to the vast amount of money being paid to traditional leaders, particularly chiefs and headmen whose work deserving such payment is not easy to trace.

According to Carrim (2000:114), municipalities have to use their resources and annually allocate funds in their budget, as appropriate to develop a culture of community participation. This is in line with the provisions of section 16 (1) of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000) which provides that a municipality must develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance and must, for this purpose, encourage and create conditions for the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality.

Municipalities particularly those with a rural background, are faced with a big challenge on the scarcity of resources. Despite such a dilemma the Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998) leaves it within the discretion of the council to make administrative arrangements to enable ward committee members to function. This does not prevent the council from reimbursing committee members for travel costs and out-of-pocket expenses.

The Municipal System Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000) provides specifically that councils must allocate funds in their budgets for the implementation of community participation. This should include funds for ward committees (http://www.communitylawcentre.org.za). This is a major incentive in improving the performance of ward committees. When people are empowered with the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them to do their work they develop an interest in what they are doing and consequently their performance will improve.
4.5 Empowerment of ward committees

Another strategy that should be applied is empowerment through capacity building. This should be the responsibility of the council. Section 16(1) (b) of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of the 2000), requires of municipalities to contribute to building the capacity of the local community to enable them to participate in the affairs of the municipality, councillors and staff to foster community participation and use its resources and annually allocate funds in its budget for the purpose of implementing capacity building (Carrim, 2001:114). This provision should be applicable to ward committees to enable them to improve their performance.

For the ward committees to function well, committee members need to be informed about the work of the Council and the way in which processes such as budgets and the integrated development plan work. This needs training to ensure that ward committee members have skills to talk with the community (http://www.asalgp.co.za).

Capacity building for ward committee should focus on empowering committee members on the having knowledge to run and not merely be involved in community based project. This can be achieved through the introduction of, for example, the adult basic education and training programmes (ABET) in all ward committees. ABET is a process for adults aimed at building the necessary literacy, numeracy and life skills competences. By introducing ABET to members of ward committees they will be provided with access to further education, training and development for acquisition of qualifications which gives access to further education and training (FET) band on the NQF (national qualifications framework). Once ward committee members are given an opportunity to voluntarily participate in such a programme they become motivated and as a result their performance will greatly improve.
Training of ward committee members is of paramount importance as a strategy directed towards improving their performance. In a country such as South Africa resources are extremely limited and it is of cardinal importance for managers to utilize the existing resources effectively in order to achieve greater need satisfaction (van der Waldt and du Toit 1997:21). The council should, for the purposes of putting ward committee members through the ABET programme work closely in conjunction with the department of Education in the province. This will ensure effective utilisation of the limited resources by having access to the skills development fund.

It is also seen to be necessary to train ward committees on the reconstruction and development programme (RDP). According to Cloete and Mokgoro (1995: 94), training at local government level takes place independently of the central and provincial levels and operates in the context of a complex set of structures. Training refers to the extension of knowledge for the specific purpose of filling a given position and to effectively perform the work involved. It is aimed at the practical application of specific behaviour patterns, attitudes and motives with a view to realisation of the goals.

The exposure of ward committee members to the implementation of the RDP issues will not only boost their morale but will also and greatly improve their performance. With the implementation of the RDP, available resources are being relocated and a shift in emphasis is taking place with regard to priorities. The ward committees have an obligation, in terms of the new local government dispensation, towards the community to increase the general welfare.

Consequently the public expects the best possible management processes and services from public institutions. The demands and standards for effective action are therefore constantly increasing and ward committee members have to adapt to this. The necessity for training and development for ward committees in this context is obvious (van der Waldt and du Toit, 1997: 21).
Involving and training ward committees in RDP programmes will be a major achievement for a local council. These committee members could ease many of the burdens of the council in service delivery to the communities within their jurisdiction (http://www.anc.org.za). It is felt that by building capacity at ward committee level by involving ward committee members to effectively participate and lead community-based projects would be an important milestone for the community. The community will not only benefit in knowledge of the local affairs issues but would also save on costs of travel to the council as information will be readily available at their doors.

Ward committee members should also be trained in the utilisation and implementation of the extended public work programme (EPWP). EPWP is one of the South African government’s short-to-medium term programmes aimed at the provision of additional work opportunities coupled with training. It is a national programme covering all spheres of government and state owned enterprises. It cuts across all government departments in all spheres of government. Under the EPWP, all government bodies are required to make systematic efforts to target the unskilled unemployed. They will do this by formulating plans for utilising their budgets to draw significant numbers of the unemployed into productive work in such a way that workers gain skills while they work to increase their chances of getting out of the marginalised pool of unemployed people (http://www.dplg.gov.za). This is a strategy that the ward committee members would be welcoming. The mere fact that they would be trained to gain knowledge on the EPWPs is on its own a significant challenge. This is so because the most of the unemployed whom the programmes target are the youth. By being involved and having knowledge of how such programmes work would make ward committee members more committed thus improving their performance and enhancing service delivery.

One other strategy would be to build capacity of ward committees towards the concept of community development. Training in this regard would be tailor-made so as to link ward community activities with those of CDWs. This is an area that can be implemented with speed because the government has trained community development workers. Community development is about
placing individuals at the center of the development process and helping them to realise their potential. It acknowledges that the best solution to a problem comes from experience and challenges.

Community development emphasises people’s participation, fosters self-reliance and bottom up problem solving. This approach is based on the principle that, through raising awareness individuals can develop skills so that they are able to build a collective community responsive to an issue (http://www.dplg.gov.za). It is urged that ward committees and the community development workers should work together at ward level. The CDWs have received training however short-term it has been. It will be a good strategy for the local councils to consider training ward committee members on how to work closely with the CDWs. The implementation of community development (CD) should result in empowered people, the deepening and strengthening of democracy, restored dignity of the people, governance and responsible citizens (http://www.dplg.gov.za). This statement alone is full of motivation. Once ward committees have the necessary knowledge of the work of CDWs their interest will grow as will enthusiasm for their community work. That will without doubt improve their performance. Community development workers are community-based resource persons who collaborate with other community activities to help fellow community members to obtain information and resources from services provided with the aim of learning how to progressively meet their needs, achieve goals, realise their aspirations and maintain their well-being. They are cadres of a special type, participatory change agents who work within communities from where they are selected, where they live, and to whom they are answerable for their activities. Building capacity in ward committee members towards the direction of community development would without doubt also prove advantageous. Therefore, municipal council should take such initiatives. At some point in time suggestions have come up for the establishment of local ward advisory councils.
4.6 Local ward advisory councils

According to Carrim (2001:117), ideally, the ward committees should be used to mobilise the broadest range of interests in the community behind progressive goals as part of the overall national democratic transition. Attempts must be made to ensure representation from civic, development, trade union, business, tax, women, youth, religious, cultural and other organisations. Ward committee members would be more than willing to obtain advice on the needs of the community from people whom they trust and value. These should be the people who, by virtue of their vast knowledge and experience irrespective of educational status, command respect in their communities. Once ward committees acknowledge the backing from such groups of people in the community, they would tend to pull up their socks because of the belief that they are moving in the right direction. The utilisation of local community advisers could prove most effective. These are the local people who know their own communities very well. The advantage of involving community advisors is that they are a link between ward committees, councils, community members and other stakeholders. They can keep communication channels open between the community and the municipality and provide both with information on a continuing basis (http://www.asalgp.co.za).

The local ward advisory councils should be the core group of the ward committees. They should be formed by a well representative structure of the elderly, (men and women) the youth, and especially the unemployed. People with high education status within the community should be invited to give advice to the ward committees. The local ward advisory council ward can meet twice in a year. i.e. before the strategic planning session mentioned previously and after such session has taken place. This would enable all the advisory council members to give advice and be able to check if the goals for which the ward committees have been established are being met. They could give advice both to the ward and the respective council.
4.7 Conclusion

In concluding this chapter it must be mentioned that in order to improve the performance of ward committees their effective involvement in the strategic planning process of their respective local council is a viable strategic approach. This could be achieved through effective monitoring and evaluation of the activities at the ward committee level. The national government should also consider the remuneration of ward committee members as recognition of for their performance. A comprehensive empowerment programme for ward committees should be put in place.
CHAPTER FIVE
Recommendations and conclusion

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has dealt with the ideal strategies to be employed in order to improve the performance of ward committees. The stage has now come for the researcher to make recommendations and conclude the presentation. In doing so attention will be drawn to the ward councillors as heads of ward committees and ward committee members as community leaders, public participation and communication policy, capacity building, training and on-the-job training. These recommendations are by no means the only alternatives available in order to improve the performance of ward committees. They only provide the ideal guidelines on the views of the author in as far as improving the delivery of services at the ward committee level. This will be followed by the conclusion.

5.2 Recommendations

The investigation into challenges to the ward committee system of developmental local municipalities with specific reference to the two municipalities of Intsika Yethu and Engcobo under the Chris Hani District municipality in the Eastern Cape Province has been completed. The following actions are recommended for consideration by the local councils, which are utilising the ward committee system.
5.2.1 Ward councillors and ward committees

Ward councillors have been democratically elected to represent their voters so that they have the ultimate responsibility of making and carrying out decisions. The community votes for the people they like based on the policies the party told the electorate about before the election. The majority of the community has given them the right to make a number of decisions based on these policies. However, not all policies are totally comprehensive, nor are they always completely thought through. Some policies will be found not to work as they begin to be implemented. Therefore, there is always room for community input. Indeed, research has shown that involving the community can bring much greater success when policies are implemented (http://www.asalgp.co.za).

Ward committees must be empowered in such a way that they are able to involve the community in the initial stages of policy implementation. According to Sabella and Reddy in (Reddy 1995:11), councillors must be fully-fledged members of their constituencies. Consequently, they have the opportunity to listen to the views of their constituencies and also have the opportunity to express their own views. In dialogue there is learning, and either the councillor’s views will be modified by the community who will change the opinion of the constituency. Dialogue must be regular and frequent.

The councillor must never be so busy that he/she cannot attend ward or party meetings. He or she has to maintain regular contact with the constituents. In a nutshell, it is strongly recommended that ward councillors must not serve the ward committee whilst they have other employment elsewhere. It is clear they would have divided attention and those that will suffer most will be the ward committees.

Ward councillors, as chairpersons of ward committees, must also be accountable for the ward committee activities. There is no point for, example, for a councillor of a ward to be a traffic officer. When is this person going to have time for the ward committee work? Surely there will be injustice done on
the side of the ward committees. Ward councillors must operate full-time; hence it was suggested earlier on to increase their remuneration package. According to Mastenbroek and Seytler (1997:62), financial, structural, administrative and technical problems facing the 842 municipalities in South Africa are manifold and profound. Constructing an accountable and responsive, efficient and effective local government structure out of what history has bequeathed us is a challenge, the extent of which might not yet be fully appreciated. Ward committees must be strong with a distinctly developmental nature. The local council must build their capacity to design and implement development strategies (Mastenbroek and Seytler, 1997:62).

Ward committees play a very valuable role in locally initiated economic development. They could be utilised even more effectively by councils, municipalities and provinces in achieving poverty alleviation and addressing unemployment (http://www.asalgp.co.za). In this regard ward committees must be given the role of monitoring community-based projects like those that are implemented through the expanded public work programmes (EPWP). They must be able to ensure the involvement of the unemployed, especially the youth in such projects. Community-based projects are aimed at leanerships for the unemployed and provide opportunities for them to enter the labour market. This must be entrenched in the council by-laws. In addition to this vital role to be played by ward committees, it is strongly recommended that the DPLG and other stakeholders including SALGA (South African Local Government Association) should do more to assist municipalities to advance community participation and ward committees more specifically.

Capacity building programmes are vital in this regard. Some consideration should be given to a national fund for ward committees to assist in particular the weaker municipalities, to develop an effective ward committee system. In general, ward committees are composed of 10 people. However, legislation should allow that in certain circumstances, where wards are very big, ward committees should be allowed to be larger. For instance, some municipalities in rural areas have wards that stretch for 50 or 70 kilometers. Clearly to have a 10-person ward committee in these circumstances is not viable.
It is recommended that the legislation should be amended to accommodate the circumstances in these wards. In this regard consideration should be given to effecting appropriate amendment to section 73 (2) b of the Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998). In addition to these factors it is felt that ward committees should serve a two-year term. This recommendation for the extension of the term of office for ward committees is made on the basis of continuity and sustainability. It is felt that it is of no use and purpose for the ward committee members to be involved in community-based projects for only one term. Some programmes will extend from short, to medium, to long term, and consideration should be given to that aspect.

According to the Australia South Africa Local Government Partnership activity technical report (2004:47), it is useful for ward committees to develop a ward profile. This will be very effective, as they would then know their communities very well. Ward committee could use the ward profile information in the development of their annual action plan. They need to have an annual action plan that clearly lays out what their priorities are and what they can expect to achieve. This plan will also help them to report to the local council as they can report each month on their plan of action.

There are essential things that can help ward committees to run effectively. The following are recommended:

- Ward committees are more likely to succeed if they have ward councillors who are committed to them and really want to make them work.
- Ward committees need some resources, for example, ward committee members may need to be reimbursed for traveling to and from committee meetings.
- Members may need new skills. For instance, members may need training about their role, how to provide good leadership, how to communicate ward committee matters to their communities and how to run meetings, and take minutes.
• ward committees need to set up effective systems of governance, communication and service delivery.

• ward committees need to work out how they influence municipal and traditional leadership’s decision-making system.

• Municipalities need to work out how they can support ward committees so that decisions that can occur contribute to bring efficiency in service delivery and local socio-economic systems.

• It is important for ward committees to choose a project they are passionate about so that they can work together and learn how to function together as a team. If members are passionate and committed to a project, they are likely to be drawn together to make a real difference within the community.

Ward committees have a lot of knowledge about their local communities and are also active in implementing community projects and initiatives such as clean-up campaigns or food gardens. They can assist in organising community forums within their wards. They can help bring together key stakeholders. The municipalities must take advantage of this aspect (http://www.asalgp.co.za).

5.2.2 Public participation and communication policy

Municipalities need to develop public participation and communication policies so that all staff, councillors, committee members and community people know when, how and on what basis, they have to participate in municipal affairs. Without this policy, communities can find it difficult to know how to raise their issues through ward committees (http://www.asalgp.co.za).

It is recommended that the ward committees and their members should form part of the team to develop the policy so that they can have insight and thorough knowledge when it comes to implementation. This is the policy that should consider that forums and development opportunities be considered for women are either already in political positions or aspiring to be to assist with
addressing the feelings of disempowerment expressed by women councillors (ASALGP, 2004:11).

Furthermore, there is no point in running community participation processes like those of establishing ward committees if the municipality does not intend to use the information. Municipalities need to understand how to use the information well. This means staff and councillors should have discussed and agreed on a range of ways of including community’s views in municipal decisions. Ward committees need to form part of the process of change. The most effective ways of doing this are developing a public participation plan for the year, and a public participation policy which sets out the municipality’s commitment to public participation in decision making, the kinds of issues in which they will include the community’s views, and what they will do with the information once the community has talked with them. If ward committees are the real communication channel between their communities and the local council there is no way that they must can take ownership or be part of the process (http://www.asalgp.co.za).

A municipal public participation policy needs to include the element of a communication strategy. The strategy must outline clear reporting, feedback and communication between the council and ward committees. In some municipalities reporting and feedback are in place, but the next step needs to be the development of a consistent and strategic approach to reporting, feedback and conversation into the reality of the potential in the role ward committees can play in addressing strategic issues, such as developing a culture of payment of rates, or addressing poverty alleviation through local economic development projects (ASLAGP: 2004:7).

According to Rakosa (1998:50-51), it is recommended that the public participation policy or plan needs to provide for ward committees a checklist of assessing which plans are likely to be successful and could serve as a guiding light. Included in the checklist would be questions such as:

- Are those who have been historically disadvantaged well integrated into, and empowered by the process?
Are the plans self-sustainable, as can been deduced from the continued commitment of the council and the local community?

Is the degree of information disseminated for the training of those involved sufficient?

According to the White Paper on Local Government (1998:23), municipalities face great challenges in promoting human rights and meeting human needs, in addressing past backlogs, and spatial distortions, and planning for a sustainable future. Local government can only meet these challenges by working together with local citizens, communities and business, and by adopting a developmental approach which enhances their capacity as policy and planning centres, able to manage a range of development initiatives resources and processes through a coherent vision and integrated planning framework for their local area.

This approach also focuses on their own institutional and financial capacity for the delivery of affordable and sustainable services relevant to the needs of local communities. Addressing these challenges now rests upon the shoulders of ward committees. According to Rakosa (1998:50-51), there can be a set of guidelines putting forward both what ward committee members, as community leaders, and the community should do. It is recommended that the following be included in these guidelines:

- Initiate and champion the process of development
- Get key stakeholders involved, and
- Ensure that the process works for the common good.

Municipalities must show commitment to encourage public participation in the affairs of local governance e.g. putting time into making connection with the community. The only visible way to accomplish this is through the effective utilisation of ward committees. Public participation processes, like meetings, assist in assessing the success of specific ward committees. The ward committees hear back directly from community members how they are performing in certain areas and this will help municipalities provide better services to communities.
Meaningful participation needs to be coaxed by ward committees through:

- Indicating the benefits of the process for instance, the accommodation of one’s interest in the final plan;
- demonstrating that changes will be for the common good;
- affecting the immediate benefits of participation (for instance, the general public’s interests must not only be heeded, they must be seen to be heeded, by shaping the progress of the process around the most significant of them (Rakosa, 1998:53).

5.2.3 Capacity building and training on community-based projects

The major concern that immediately comes to the fore is whether ward committees and ward committee members have the necessary capacities to enable them to perform their roles and functions in accordance with what is expected of them. In the National Conference on Ward Committees held in June (2003.11-12), there was consensus that capacity building is a key instrument in the successful functioning of ward committees. Short-term issues that were raised are: the varying level of literacy should be considered when developing training programmes. Training programmes are sometimes too academic and they need to be practical. There are too many training programmes. Ownership of training programmes should be addressed as municipalities are funding training programmes that they do not own. Traditional leaders should be included in capacity building initiatives and their participation in ward committees could be encouraged. Business plans for accessing funding do not reflect establishment and governance plans. The role of ward committees, basic literacy, communication skills, conflict management, negotiations, meeting procedures and secretarial services should form part of the training.

The White Paper on Local Government, 1998, Section F, refers to the establishment of support mechanisms for municipal transformation that will be created by national government. These include training and capacity building which will be achieved through the reorganisation of the local government
training system. Working with provincial governments and SALGA to develop on going capacitating programmes could be another intervention.

Section 68(1) of the Local Government Municipal Structures Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000), only relates to a municipality that must develop its human resource capacity to a level that enables it to perform its functions and exercise its powers in an economic, effective, efficient and accountable way. This must comply with the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 81 of 1998), and the Skills Development Levies Act, 1999 (Act 28 of 1999). Training programmes should also be aligned with the SETA process.

The National Conference on Ward Committees (2003: 2-3) resolved that (1) DPLG, provinces, SALGA and LGWSETA (local government water sector education and training authority) working with other role-players, should develop a targeted national support programme for ward committees, taking into account inputs from the conference. (2) The programme of support must be part of the national capacity building framework coordinated by DPLG through the national steering committee on capacity building. (3) The DPLG must compile a booklet on lessons learnt from different pilot programmes and initiatives for distribution. (4) SALGA, through the knowledge sharing programme must develop learning material to be shared among municipalities. (5) Municipalities should conduct capacity building and training needs assessment for members of the committee on an annual basis, including ward committees in their skills development plans. They should set aside a budget for capacity building and training in accordance with the needs assessment.

The department of provincial and local government (DPLG) had developed draft guidelines for the establishment and operation of municipal ward Committees. The purpose of the guidelines is to provide uniform and simplified guidelines to ward committee members, ward councillors and metropolitan and local municipalities. On capacity building and training the guidelines require that, (1) ward committees should prepare an annual capacity building and training needs assessment for members of the committee, (2) an annual capacity building and training programme should be
developed for each member of the ward committee, (3) an annual budget for the capacity building and training programme should be prepared according to the needs assessment.

Capacity building is one of the most important tools in the restructuring process particularly in the local government sphere. If used effectively it is an all embracing concept that describes the notion of developmental local government in a meaningful manner through training, education, and reorientation, support and monitoring, transfer of information, skills and knowledge (Subban, 1996:93). However, capacity building with regard to ward committees and ward committee members still presents major challenges. Perhaps, the impression created around the issue is the level of literacy among ward councillors and ward committee members (Cameron, 1999:252).

5.2.3.1 Training on community-based projects

In terms of the basic guide to the reconstruction and development programme (RDP), a priority will be given to the training of workers to meet the challenges of our new political and economic conditions and our re-entry to the world economy. Training will recognise and give credit for experience and skills. (http://www.anc.org.za).

Ward communities are busy with community work daily. They live within these communities, so municipalities must embark on a comprehensive capacity building process for ward committee members to enable them to work effectively. Ward committee members would work best as facilitators in the process rather than as direct policy makers. It is therefore advisable that they have a good background of process skills and content knowledge on how to run community projects to be able to be good champions of the process (Rakosa, 1998:51).

It is recommended further that municipalities should conduct capacity building and training needs assessment for members of ward committees on an annual basis, include ward committees in their skills development plans, develop and implement capacity building and training programmes for members of the ward committee, and set aside a budget for the capacity
building and training in accordance with the needs assessment (National Conference on Ward Committees, 2003:14).

It is also viewed that funding for training of ward committee members should be derived from and coordinated at the national level. Train the trainer programmes should be considered as part of the delivery of the training process (ASALGP, 2004:11). Training for ward committee members could focus on understanding the concept and principles of community participation as well as the advantages and disadvantages of community participation in local governance (http://www.asalgp.co.za).

A half-day training session could cover the meaning and principles of public participation, advantages and challenges of public participation and the measures to address challenges to public participation (http://www.asalgp.co.za). It is also advisable that ward committees should prepare an annual capacity building and training needs assessment for members of the committee. An annual capacity building and training programme should be developed for each member of the ward committee and an annual budget should be prepared that would link to the identified needs assessment (Draft Guidelines for the Establishment of Ward Committees, 2004:7). The following two types of training are deemed appropriate for ward committee members.

5.2.3.1.1 On-the-job training (OJT)

According to Grobler, et al (2002:323), on-the-job training and development techniques, commonly referred to as OJT, typically involve job instruction given by an experienced person. The majority of ward committee members are illiterate as observed from the questionnaire responses received for the study. It will be more appropriate for the local council to organise the OJT type of training for the community–based projects. Moreover, it has also been noticed from the research that a greater part of the ward committee members is formed by people between ages 40 to 60. OJT may involve learning how to run a specific programme or project. Through this technique ward committee
members may benefit more and the local council would be facing fewer burdens in terms of delivery of services.

5.2.3.1.2 Learnership programmes

Another type of training that should be suitable for ward committee members is the leanerships programme. Engagement in this programme could prove beneficial especially for the youth who are involved in ward committees. It can also prepare them for entering the labour market as they would gain work experience on various community projects.

5.3 Conclusion

In conclusion it is worth mentioning that ward committees are a prime instrument in government’s objective to establish participatory democracy, where citizens are actively involved in making decisions that will impact directly on their lives. They also facilitate the participative requirements embodied in the Constitution and local government legislation.

South Africa is a country which understands the importance of community and ward committees that can enhance community involvement by providing communities with an opportunity to participate in planning and decision-making in matters that affect them. Even the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 1996 (Act 108 of 1996) has the principle which says that one of the objects of local government is to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in local government affairs. It goes further by saying that the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making processes. Thus, local government has a responsibility to actively work out ways to include the community in decision making.

The study has to look at the notion of participatory democracy in developmental local government. In the wider context of a South African public policy, local government’s place has changed dramatically since 1994.
Nowadays the local council represents the interests of the community and as such, the local citizens and groups must be involved in decisions and processes which will affect them. Ward councillors need to promote the involvement of citizens and community groups in the design and delivery of local programs. Furthermore local government can play an important role in promoting job creation and boosting the local economy and this can be achieved through community involvement.

Municipalities face great challenges in promoting human rights and meeting human needs, addressing past backlogs and spatial distortions, and planning for a sustainable future. Local government can only meet these challenges by working together with local citizens, communities and businesses. A key feature of local government is the constitutional entrenchment of democratic governance.

Local government is mandated with developmental functions enabling it to work together with local communities to find sustainable ways to meet the needs of the communities and improve their quality of life. Primarily among the roles which local government has to perform is promoting participatory democracy. An essential route towards attaining this goal would be working with people towards meeting their social, economic and material needs. This concept presents challenges and opportunities for the different actors expected to be involved in the process of development.

It is in the interest of the nation that local government be capacitated and transformed to play a developmental role. Therefore, national government is committed to providing support to enable municipalities to utilise the options and tools put forward in the Local Government White Paper, 1998 to make them more developmental. Developmental local government is intended to make a major impact on the daily lives of South Africans.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996) enshrines the rights of all people in our country to dignity, equality before the law, freedom and security. It affirms our rights to freedom of religion, expression, culture, association and movement, as well as our political, labour
and property rights. Thus it is concluded that in the future developmental local government must play a central role in representing our communities, protecting our human rights and meeting our basic needs.

The theory and practice of the field of study have focused on the concept of participatory democracy with the underlying principles of public and participatory government, the origin, the nature and role of ward committees. Part of the developmental role of local government identified by the Local Government White Paper, 1998 is to build participatory democracy and encourage community participation. Since local government is the most direct interface between the government and the community it should be the best location for the development of a grassroots, participatory, deep-rooted democracy.

In terms of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act it is clear that residents have the right to contribute to the municipality’s decision-making processes. They also have the right to submit recommendations and complaints to the council and are entitled to prompt responses to these. They have a right also to the regular disclosure of the state of affairs of the municipality including its finances.

Community participation is crucial to the success of our newly established local government for the community to take or accept ownership so as to understand the structure, systems and policies and to buy-in and give consent to the actions, programmes and plans proposed by government. It has been observed in this research study that one of the most progressive aspects of the new system of local government is the considerable space it provides for community participation.

Public participation is a process. One can plan the process, community can be included throughout, and the process can be reviewed. The most important thing is to tell the community how their views have been used. Community participation is not only a fundamental part of democracy; it will ensure that
better decisions are made as local people know their community with its local difficulties and strengths.

Government programmes and actions can then be based more clearly on the reality of people’s lives. It may be further concluded that participation is a fundamental right of all people where decisions made by them on their own behalf will often be better than those made for them by other people because people know what they need in their own lives. Therefore, public participation can help municipalities deliver services. Community members often have local knowledge and wisdom that municipalities can tap into to improve their service delivery.

It needs to be planned and thought out by a team of people representing the municipality, the community and other relevant parties. Participation processes need to be flexible yet targeted, so that a wide range of community people can have their say in the municipality’s business.

It has been observed throughout the study that community participation through ward committees is important for the democratic functioning of the council. The speaker should be responsible for overseeing the establishment and effective functioning of the ward committees. In fact it must be concluded that the primary function of a ward committee is to be a formal communication channel between the community and the council. In terms of the Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998), a ward committee may make recommendations on any matter affecting the ward to the ward councillor or through that councillor to the council. A ward committee would be the proper channel through which communities can lodge their complaints. It would also be a forum for communication between the ward councillor and the ward community about municipal issues, their development and the service options.

In a broad sense, a ward committee should be a communication channel for the entire ward community. Members of ward committees are volunteers from the communities and therefore committed to making a difference to their
communities; initiating, leading and monitoring projects are key aspects of the ward committee work.

The study has also considered the tenets of public participation of ward committees in local governance. Integrated development planning, budgeting and performance management are powerful tools which can assist local councils to develop an integrated perspective on development in their areas. They enable them to focus on priorities within an increasingly complex and diverse set of demands. They also enable them to direct resource allocation and institutional systems to a new set of development objectives.

The implementation of each IDP should be carefully monitored so as to ensure that results are achieved. A performance management system is therefore required to measure the success of the IDPs. This is critical to ensure that plans are being implemented, that they are having the desired development impact and that resources are being used efficiently. Municipalities currently set their own measures of performance or key performance indicators.

It is also worth concluding that municipal budgets are a critical tool for refocusing the resources and capacity of the municipality behind developmental goals. Therefore, budgets must be developed in relation to the policies and programmes put forward in municipal integrated development plans. Given that resources are scarce, community participation in the development of integrated development plans and municipal budgets is essential.

The latter part of the chapter on theory and practice dealt with gender issues, the relationship between ward committee members and traditional leaders. Given the opportunity, women and the youth have the power to participate effectively and influence the processes that are geared to the development of their communities. It is crucial to involve more women at the level of the ward committees. Traditional leaders as well have the obligation to effectively participate in their local government affairs. Their relationship with ward committees provides an important link for the development of our societies.
The study has applied a quantitative research methodology as an attempt to address the research problem, the main hypothesis as well as the sub hypothesis. This research method has been found appropriate mainly because it is, among other things, concerned with numbers and data are easily quantified. After choosing the research method it was also found imperative to identify the data collection methods/techniques to be used. The study has made use of survey research technique with the use of the survey questionnaires as the data collection and measuring instruments that were administered to the participants or respondents. The type was self-administered questionnaires. These can be administered without direct personal contact with respondents and are completed without the assistance of an interviewer.

The study has also looked into issues of ethical considerations that must be kept in mind when doing research. This came out of the thinking that when researchers think about how to conduct research they must think not only of using the right techniques they have come across. They must think about the research ethics as well. Among issues of ethical considerations that have been discussed are: no harm must come to the subjects, informed consent is necessary, privacy or voluntary participation is essential, deception is to be avoided, anonymity and confidentiality are important. The latter part of the research methodology dealt with data analysis and interpretation as classified in terms of the research questionnaire (Babbie, 1998:150-153).

The study has further paid attention to the strategies that should be applied to improve the performance of ward committees. The involvement of ward committees in the strategic planning process of their respective local councils, the remuneration of ward councillors and ward committee members, the empowerment of ward committee members through programmes such as the Adult Based Education and Training (ABET), the involvement of women and youth in community based projects and the establishment of local advisory councils/committees are some of the strategies that have been put forward.
Bibliography


Ibid.


Meiring, M.H. and De Villiers, P.F.A.. 2001. The essence of being a municipal councillor. Port Elizabeth; University of Port Elizabeth.


Ibid.


Annexure A

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Research Title: An investigation of the challenges facing the ward committee system with specific reference to selected municipalities in the Province of the Eastern Cape

Researcher: Mr Albert Mncedisi Ntlemeza

Supervisor: Mr. MS Binza (Raymond Mhlaba Research Unit of Public Administration and Leadership, NMMU)

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to investigate the challenges faced by ward committees in the new developmental local government system. Instika Yethu and Engcobo local municipalities under the Chris Hani District Municipality will be used as a sample. The study is sponsored through the bursary policy in the Office of the Premier where the author is currently employed.

Summary of the research results will be forwarded to both respective offices of the Municipal Managers of the above mentioned local municipalities. It is perceived that such results will provide some guidelines for the various approaches that can be used to address the challenges faced by ward committees, as well as information on community participation in the affairs of the local council.

Please note that the completion of the questionnaire will take less than ten minutes of your time. Therefore, it will be appreciated if response(s) can be received without much delay on or before the 15th October 2005.

It is guaranteed that the information provided in the questionnaire will be treated anonymously and with complete confidentiality.

Questions for clarity must be directed to Mr. Albert Mncedisi Ntlemeza at 082 434 8777 082 775 5651(and/or 040- 6096145 during office hours).

SECTION A
### BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Please cross with an “X” next to the appropriate box or where indicated provide a written response:

1. **Gender**
   - Male ¹
   - Female ²

2. **Age**
   - 20-29 ¹
   - 30-39 ²
   - 40-49 ³
   - 50-59
   - 60+

3. **Home Language**
   - English¹
   - Afrikaans²
   - Xhosa³
   - Other: (Please specify)

4. **Marital status**
   - Single¹
   - Married²
   - Separated/Divorced³

5. **Race group**
   - Black¹
   - White²
   - Coloured³
   - Asian

6. **Employment status**
   - Full time employed¹
   - Part time employed²
   - Unemployed³
   - Pensioner

7. **Educational level**
   - < Matric¹
   - Matric²
   - Diploma/Certificate³
   - Degree & post graduate

8. **Do you have any form of disability?**
   - Yes¹
   - No²

### SECTION B

**GENERAL QUESTIONS**

Please place a cross “X” next to the correct answer to the following questions:

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### SECTION C
KEY ISSUES

Challenges faced by ward committees

7 Ward committees are faced with many challenges, e.g. making recommendations on the needs of the community to the council, being the channel of communication between the council and the community, attending public meetings and ward committee meetings.

8 Ward committees effectively manage the challenges they are faced with.

9 Do ward committees get the necessary municipal council support?

Roles, powers and functions of ward committees.

10 Ward committees understand their roles, powers and functions.

11 Are ward committee members trained to do their work?

12 Ward committees do their job well.

Community participation in local government affairs
13 How does the community participate in the affairs of the municipal council?

14 Community participation is key to developmental local government.

15 All members of ward committees attend council meetings.

Integrated Development Planning (IDPs)

16 Ward committees are greatly involved in the development of IDPs.

17 Ward committees enable community involvement in IDPs.

18 Ward committees do not understand the process of IDPs.

19 The process of IDPs is the responsibility of the municipal council alone.

Performance management of the council

20 Ward committee members must be allowed to audit the performance management of the council.

21 Ward committees must monitor the performance of the council.

22 Ward committees have nothing to do with performance management of the council.

Budgeting issues

23 Do ward committees understand the budget process of the local municipality?
24 Involvement of ward committees in the budget process of the council is important. 1 2 3 4 5

25 Ward committees must be allocated a budget of their own. 1 2 3 4 5

**Ward committees and the regulatory framework**

26 Ward committees fully understand the laws and policies governing local government. 1 2 3 4 5

27 Ward committees are not compelled to do their work according to law. 1 2 3 4 5

**Gender Issues**

28 Do women participate in ward committees? 1 2 3 4 5

29 Women must not be part of the ward committees. 1 2 3 4 5

30 Women are not aware of their role in the ward committees. 1 2 3 4 5

31 The youth should fully participate in ward committee affairs. 1 2 3 4 5

**Relationship between ward committees and traditional leaders**

32 Are traditional leaders part of the ward committees? 1 2 3 4 5

33 Traditional Leaders are the key figures in local government. 1 2 3 4 5

34 It is important that traditional leaders fully participate in ward committees. 1 2 3 4 5
## Capacity building

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### Comments:

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Thank you for participating in this research.
Annexure B

Questionnaire data base

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### Roles, powers and functions of ward committees

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<td>Not trained</td>
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<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Community participation in local government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Directly with council</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through ward council</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through ward committee</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All of the above</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partly agree</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Integrated development planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral/undecided</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Performance management of the council

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral/undecided</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Budgeting issues

Category Frequency table: Budgeting issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fully</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partly</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t understand</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not their business</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral/undecided</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Ward committees and the regulatory framework

Category Frequency table: Ward committees and the regulatory framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral/undecided</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Gender issues

Category Frequency table: Gender issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a greater extent</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully participate</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a lesser extent</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t participate</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral/undecided</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Relationship between ward committees and traditional leaders

Category Frequency table: Relationship between ward committees and traditional leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral/undecided</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Capacity building

Category Frequency table: Capacity building

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral/undecided</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FACULTY OF ARTS
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

02 August 2005

Enquiries: Dr D Taylor
(041) 594 2263 (Tel/ Fax)
Derek.Taylor@mmmu.ac.za

TO MUNICIPAL MANAGER: INTSIKA YETHU LOCAL MUNICIPALITY - COFIMVABA

CONFIRMATION OF ACCESS TO MATERIAL AS STUDY REQUIREMENT FOR RESEARCH IN MASTER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (MPA)

This is to confirm that the following student is a registered student at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University and is doing his Masters degree in Public Administration and Management. It would therefore be appreciated if you can assist them and let them have access to any information they feel relevant to their studies.

Albert Mcedisi Ntlemeza

Any queries in this regard can be directed to my self at the above contact details.

We appreciate your assistance in this regard

Yours faithfully

DR D Taylor
Postgraduate Programme Leader
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02 August 2005

Enquiries: Dr D Taylor
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CONFIRMATION OF ACCESS TO MATERIAL AS STUDY REQUIREMENT FOR RESEARCH II IN MASTER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (MPA)

This is to confirm that the following student is a registered student at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University and is doing his Masters degree in Public Administration and Management. It would therefore be appreciated if you can assist them and let them have access to any information they feel relevant to their studies.

Albert Mncedisi Ntlemeza

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Yours faithfully,

DR D Taylor
Annexure E

Language Quality Assurance

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29 January 2006

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

We hereby certify that we have language edited the dissertation prepared by Mr A.M Ntlemeza (total 140 pages of text with references) and that we are satisfied that, provided the changes we have made are effected to the text, the work is of a standard fit for publication.

Kate Goldstone
BA (Rhodes)
SATI No: 1000188
UPE Language Practitioner (1975-2004)
NMMU Language Practitioner (2006)

Patrick Goldstone
BSc (Stell)
DEd (UPE)