COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE WARD COMMITTEE STRUCTURES IN THE NORTHERN AREAS OF THE NELSON MANDELA BAY MUNICIPALITY

WALTER T. AH SHENE

2012
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE WARD COMMITTEE STRUCTURES IN THE NORTHERN AREAS OF THE NELSON MANDELA BAY MUNICIPALITY

WALTER T. AH SHENE

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master’s Degree in Public Administration

In the Faculty of Arts and Management at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University

SUPERVISOR: MS P.N. MFENE

2012
DEDICATION

I dedicate this treatise to my late youngest son Clyde Lee-Ross Ah Shene, who passed away tragically on 02 November 2010. Whatever you do in this life, will echo into eternity. May your precious soul rest in peace.

In humble submission to God Almighty
DECLARATION BY CANDIDATE

NAME : WALTER T. AH SHENE

STUDENT NO : 207093884

QUALIFICATION : MASTER’S DEGREE IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

TITLE OF PROJECT : COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE WARD COMMITTEE STRUCTURES IN THE NORTHERN AREAS OF THE NELSON MANDELA BAY MUNICIPALITY

DECLARATION:

In accordance with Rule G4.6.3., I hereby declare that the above-mentioned treatise/dissertation/thesis is my own work and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment to another University or for another qualification.

SIGNATURE : ______________________

DATE : ______________________
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to record my gratitude to the following people for their assistance, encouragement and contribution, which ultimately led to the completion of this study:

- My supervisor, Ms P.N. Mfene, for her professional and constructive guidance as my promoter towards the completion of this report. Her motherly approach, her patience and her words of encouragement helped me to develop a sense of independence and confidence that enable me to approach this study project with motivation and zeal.

- My wife Catherine, and our children, Brent, Clint, Colleen and the late Clyde for their sacrifices during the research period and their continued patience, love and support.

- My old aged mother for the love and support she gave me.

- The Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University Library staff for their kind assistance.

- All other contact persons that assisted with the provision of data towards the research.

- Administrative and academic staff of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University for their valued assistance at all times.

- Family, friends and colleagues for their continued words of encouragement.

- The ward councillors and ward committee members who participated in the interviews conducted for this study.
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate community development through the ward committee structures in the Northern Areas of the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality. Community development through the ward committees is the key principle in the democratisation process, as well as the promotion of good governance. Community development is an opportunity for both local government and the community to strengthen the democracy that is being enjoyed; and simultaneously to promote accountability.

In terms of the Local Government: Municipal Systems, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000), the role of local communities in the particular interests of their municipality must take place, among other things, by the ward councillor – as well as all other suitable procedures, mechanisms and processes set up by the municipality. Ward committees have the power to advise the ward councillor; and as municipal structures, they must ensure that there is always community participation in the sphere of local government. Community participation gives communities the opportunities to express their views, as well as giving them a sense of ownership.

The objectives of the study were:

- To determine the roles and responsibilities of the ward councillors in terms of the new developmental mandate (the need to encourage the involvement of communities and organisations in local government matters).
- To investigate the relations between ward councillors and their ward committees, and between the offices of ward councillors and the general public.
- To examine the extent to which ward councillors in the northern areas of the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality understand the policy and administrative procedures and processes in the municipality, when addressing issues that affect the community.
In order to achieve these objectives, it was necessary to review literature on community participation. An empirical search was conducted in wards 10 and 11 in the Northern Areas of Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality.

Recommendations were provided which could assist the municipality to effectively make use of the ward committees and the ward councillors. If implemented, these recommendations could also enhance community development through the ward committee structures. Thus, the relationship between the ward committees and the ward councillor should be harmonious; and subsequently, they should also strengthen trust between them. Then the flow of communication will improve.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication i
Declaration ii
Acknowledgements iii
Abstract iv

CHAPTER ONE
GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction 1
1.2 Background and rationale of the study 1
1.3 Motivation for the study 5
1.4 The literature review 6
1.5 Statement of the problem 8
1.6 The research question 8
1.7 The research aim 8
1.8 The research objectives 9
1.9 Delimitation of the study 9
1.10 The research methodology 10
1.11 The research design 10
1.12 Population and sampling 11
1.13 Data collection instruments 12
1.14 Data analysis and interpretation 13
1.15 Ethical considerations 13
1.16 Proposed chapter outline 13
1.17 Concluding remarks 14
CHAPTER TWO
AN OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE CONTEXT
OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Introduction 15
2.2 Community participation and community development 15
2.3 Empowerment of ward committees for community development 23
2.4 Forms of public participation and engagement 23
2.5 Rules and strategies for public participation 26
2.6 International experience on citizen participation and engagement 27
2.7 Legislative framework for public participation and community development in South African local government 27
2.7.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) 28
2.8 The relevance of Batho Pele principles to community participation for community development 31
2.9 Conclusion 31

CHAPTER THREE
THE ROLE OF WARD COMMITTEES AND COUNCILLORS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Introduction 33
3.2 The establishment, powers and duties of ward committees 34
3.3 Public participation through ward committees 38
3.4 The complementary role of community development workers in community development 43
3.5 The role of ward committees and councillors in community development 45
3.5.1 The role of councillors in community development 45
3.5.2 The role of ward committees in community development 49
3.6 Conclusion 51
CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction 52
4.2 Research methodology 53
4.3 Research design 54
4.4 Population and sampling 55
4.5 Data collection methods 56
4.6 Ethical considerations 59
4.7 Description and locality of wards 10 and 11 61
4.8 Presentation and interpretation of data 62
4.8.1 Responses on questions on ward committee meetings 64
4.8.2 Responses on the role of ward councillors in their respective wards 65
4.8.3 Responses on the questions on orientation training of ward councillors 66
4.8.4 Responses on the questions about community participation 67
4.8.5 Responses on the question of areas that need to be developed in wards 10 and 11 68
4.8.6 Responses on the questions of the role of ward committees in community development 69
4.8.7 Responses on the questions on the role of ward committees 69
4.8.8 Responses on the funds available for community development 70
4.8.9 Responses on the communication between the municipality and ward committees 71
4.8.10 The influence of political parties in ward committees 72
4.9 Conclusion 73

CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction 74
5.2 Conclusion 74
5.3 Recommendations 75
5.3.1  Recommendations for improved roles of ward councillors in the functioning of ward committees  75
5.3.2  Recommendations on the training of ward committees on human relations  76
5.3.3  Recommendations based especially on the stipend and the community development workers  77
5.3.4  Recommendations based on ward committees in community development  77
5.3.5  Recommendations on improved community participation in community development  78
5.3.6  Recommendations on the relationship between ward councillors and ward committees  79

List of references  81

Annexures:
Annexure 1:  Letter of consent from municipality (NMBM)  92
Annexure 2:  Ward councillor interviews  93
Annexure 3:  Ward community interviews  95
Annexure 4: Language quality assurance – Certificate statement  98
CHAPTER ONE
GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study investigates the effective development of communities through the ward committee structures, with specific reference to the Northern Areas of the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (NMBM). According to the World Bank Development Report (1994:2), sustainable development can be achieved if, amongst other things, a strong voice and responsibility are given to the communities and stakeholders involved in development. This highlights the essential nature of public consultation and participation in development.

This chapter will provide a motivation for the study to be undertaken, such as the problem statement, the objectives of the study, as well as the research methods used. A section will be wholly devoted to the exact meaning of important terms. It will also make clear the motive for the careful selection of the area of study.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Hicks (2006:1) states that ward committees are regarded as the vehicle through which municipalities and communities engage in municipal decision-making processes. Hicks (2006) furthermore observe that in most municipalities in South Africa where ward committees are functional, their interaction with communities is marked by uncertainty and chaos.

According to Hicks (2006:1), citizen participation in municipal decision-making is often merely elite participation through non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other organised civil society and interest groups that have access to the necessary resources. This study seeks to determine the inclusivity of all stakeholders by the NMBM, with regard to community development, through the ward committee structures – using the Northern Areas as the research nucleus.
The Northern Areas are situated to the north of Port Elizabeth; and they stretch from Korsten to Booysen Park and beyond. The inhabitants are predominantly Coloured people. There are also Africans living in areas such as Chatty Extension, Kwanoxolo and Timothy Valley. The Northern Areas consist of nine wards, namely: wards 10 (Gelvandale), 11 (Schauderville), 12 (Malabar), 13 (Helenvale), 32 (Cleary Estate), 34 (Arcadia), 35 (West End), 38 (Bloemendal), and 41 (Booysen Park).

Fox and Meyer (1995:20) define community participation and development as the involvement of citizens in a wide range of administrative policy-making activities. These include the determination of levels of service, budget priorities and the acceptability of physical construction projects, in order to orient government programmes towards community needs, to build public support, and to encourage a sense of cohesiveness within society.

Consequently, this study conceptualises community development as intrinsic to how local government operates, since communities need to be actively involved in the decision-making process. One of the key tests for the effectiveness of ward committees is their impact on council decision-making.

Munslow, FitzGerald and McLennan (1997:4) stated that sustainable development needs to be at the very heart of South Africa’s developmental programme, as it places most of these concerns, and in particular, meeting basic needs, at the centre of the agenda of the growth process itself.

Section 16(1) of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000) states that development is sustainable, if it is aimed at:

(a) Improving the quality of life of its members, with specific reference to the poor and other disadvantaged sections of the community; and
(b) Ensuring that the capacity of local communities is developed to understand and participate in the governing process as a partner.

Section B of The White Paper on Local Government (1998:25) mentions that municipalities have a mandate to provide special economic services, or to assist
other agencies in the provision of such services, where this is appropriate. It further elaborates on developmental local government as a local government committed to working with citizens and groups in a community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs, and to improve their lives.

Ward committees were established by the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality (NMMM), in terms of Chapter 4 of the Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (117 of 1998) to ensure active participation by communities in local government affairs. This has been introduced to raise the community role at the local sphere; and the most notable structures in this instance are ward committees.

Tsatsire (2001:37-39) states that the ward committees are to serve as the link between communities and the council; and their objectives include the following, namely, to:

- Enhance participatory local governance;
- Assist the ward councillor on matters of the ward;
- Contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of all residents;
- Make recommendations to the ward councillor or to the other structures of the metropolitan council; and
- Engage residents in matters of local governance.

The National Policy Framework on Public Participation of the Republic of South Africa (2005:1) states that community structures, such as ward committees, are expected to play an active role in taking part in core municipal processes, such as: integrated development and planning, municipal budgeting and municipal performance management systems. Participatory local government ensures that communities, through their legitimate structures, own the process of development; and citizens are enabled, thereby, to make a meaningful contribution to the development of their own lives.

Without the ward committees, the system of democratic and developmental local government cannot be people-centred.
The White Paper on Local Government (1998) 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.

The empowerment of communities involves a range of activities, including creating community participatory structures, such as ward committees. These ward committees assist those community structures to plan at the local sphere through community-based planning, to implement and monitor those plans using a range of working groups and community-based organisations, supporting community-based services, and supporting local structures through the cadre of community development workers (CDWs).

According to Section A of The White Paper on Local Government (1998:9), apartheid has fundamentally damaged the spatial social and economic environment in which people live, work, raise families and seek to fulfil their aspirations. For this reason, local government has a critical role to play in rebuilding local communities and the environment, as the basis for a democratic, integrated, prosperous and truly non-racial society.

According to Section 151 of The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996, it is required that local government should provide services to communities in a sustainable manner. In this regard, Section 152(1) of the Constitution of 1996 mandates local government to:

- Ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner;
- Promote social and economic development;
- Promote a safe and healthy environment; and
- Encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in local government matters.

Section B of The White Paper on Local Government (1998) states that developmental local government has established the basis for a new development local government system, which is committed to working with citizens, groups and
communities to create human settlements, which provide for a decent quality of life and meet the social, economic and material needs of communities in a holistic manner.

A close relationship is, therefore, needed between local government and the general public; and this process needs to be facilitated by the municipal officials in conjunction with the ward committees, ward councillors and the residents in the service-delivery process.

The purpose of the study is to bring about improvements under key themes, including efficiency, transparency and accountability. It is further intended to gauge developments in the local government use of public participation approaches, such as modernisation policies and initiatives.

1.3 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of community development through the ward committee structures in the NMBM with communities in the Northern Areas.

According to Tshabalala (2007:2), the conceptualisation of local government has been placed at the cutting edge of addressing basic national challenges, such as underdevelopment, unemployment and poverty. Davids, Theron and Maphunye (2005:11) contend that municipalities are mandated to promote developmental local governance: in other words, to focus on poverty alleviation, economic growth, the management of development in an integrated and sustainable manner, and to address the socio-economic inequalities.

In South Africa, local government is one of the three spheres of government deliberatly 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).
Section 152 of The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act (1996) requires that municipalities should prioritise the basic needs of communities and promote social and economic development. According to Section 74(a) of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000), ward committees should play a crucial role in assisting municipalities in addressing underdevelopment, unemployment and poverty through public participation, thereby engaging the local communities in building public support and encouraging a sense of cohesiveness in society.

As a representative structure of the community, the establishment of ward committees is intended to assist the municipality to respond to the needs, aspirations, and challenges of local communities, in terms of the provision of basic services in a sustainable manner.

The major challenges that have influenced the Metropole lately include:

- The cash flow challenges experience by the municipality and the resultant budget cuts.
- The knock-on negative effects of the recent global economic recession.
- The need to ensure the implementation of integrated sustainable human settlements.
- Unsatisfactory progress in youth, women and disability programmes.
- Continued poverty, unemployment, social and economic inequalities.
- Service delivery backlogs and decaying infrastructures.

The question is: To what extent can ward committees ensure sustainable development of communities in the Northern Areas in Port Elizabeth?

1.4 THE LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review will be conducted to obtain the relevant information. The sources that will be consulted will include, inter alia, legislation, ordinances, relevant books, journals and other publications – to establish what strategies councillors as community leaders should adopt to assist in community development.
The objective of the literature review is to explain the relationship between public consultation and participation, and to provide a legislative analysis of the relevant legislation that guides public participation at local government level. Further to this, it is to discuss the role of ward committees and ward councillors in public consultation, and to describe and explain the challenges relating to public participation.

Williams (2005:21) states that most researchers agree that there are various factors that contribute to meaningful community participation at grassroots level. A particular local authority (municipality), such as a community forum, must (re)present the concerns and interests of a specific community to a specific planning authority. This requires reliable and reciprocal contractual relations between the voters and their elected representatives. The commitment of councillors and officials in a specific municipality will ensure effective, efficient and sustainable community participation in development planning.

From the above, it is clear that ward committees act as the link between the municipality and the communities; they are central to the process of consultation, since they should be able to detect possible reasons or causes for future protests, and to relay the information to the municipality, in order to act or address the communities before the people actually embark on such protests.

Therefore, in this context, the study seeks to determine whether there is indeed a political will and an overall commitment to public participation – by both the officials, as well as politicians in the NMBM, as perceived by the communities of the Northern Areas.

By examining the various definitions by different authors, with regard to the term “public participation”, one can argue that the concept becomes a contested one, since the definitions differ from scholar to scholar, and are therefore understood differently by different stakeholders.
1.5 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Lack of communication between the ward committees and the municipal council, and the non-existence of community participation in the decision-making process of the municipality for community development, will inevitably restrain sustainable development.

1.6 THE RESEARCH QUESTION

The study concerns two different questions. The first question is about public participation and development in local government affairs through ward committees. An inquiry will be made into the effectiveness and efficiency of ward committees in participatory democracy. The second question concerns the relationship between ward committees, ward councillors and the council.

1.7 THE RESEARCH AIM

The principal aim of this research study is:

- To explore public participation (a proactive approach to governance as a holistic learning process) and consultation, as well as sustainable development, on the one hand, and improved service delivery, on the other hand.

The secondary aims are:

- To ascertain the vital link that the councillors play in finding sustainable ways to meet the social, economic and material needs of this particular community.
- To establish how the councillors in the area meet the specific constitutional and other developmental legislative prescriptions pertaining to their communities and areas of jurisdiction.
1.8 THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are:

- To determine the roles and responsibilities of the ward councillors in terms of the new developmental mandate (the need to encourage the involvement of communities and organisations in local government matters).
- To investigate the relations between ward councillors and their ward committees, and between the offices of ward councillors and the general public.
- To examine the extent to which ward councillors in the Northern Areas of the NMBM understand the policy and administrative procedures and processes in the municipality when addressing the issues that affect the community.

In order for ward committee members to perform their functions, effective training must be provided. The local council should be responsible for providing the necessary training toward committees through the office under which they fall.

1.9 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

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 & Makgoba, 2002:4). The study will be undertaken in the Northern Areas of the NMBM, which is situated in the Eastern Cape Province. It will be limited to wards 10 and 11.

Shaidi (2007:47) states that ward committees are regarded as special-purpose vehicles for public participation, and as such, they are expected to establish effective and continuous communication with and among communities, the ward councillor and the municipality.
1.10 THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Leedy (1989:91) maintains that methodology is an operational framework within which the facts are placed, so that their meaning may be seen more clearly. According to Welman and Kruger (1999:39), research methodology refers to the methods, techniques and procedures that will be employed in the process of implementing the research plan.

Neuman (2000:7) states that qualitative research methods consider data in terms of words, pictures or objectives. Marlow (1998:10) stated that qualitative information involves the non-numerical examination of phenomena, using words instead of numbers; and it focuses on the underlying meanings and patterns of relationship. According to Anderson and Taylor (2002:35), qualitative research is research that is somewhat less structured, yet focused on the question being asked. They further state that this type of research does not make extensive use of statistical methods, but it is more interpretive and tends to have greater depth.

As this study seeks to investigate community development through the ward committee structures in the Northern Areas of the NMBM, the qualitative method is best suited, because it is more descriptive and will provide a better understanding of how the communities view the said process.

The use of qualitative research will inevitably allow for the richness of personal experiences and the meanings of the respondents to be explored. Neuman (2006:458) holds the view that the qualitative researchers examine patterns of similarities and differences across cases, and then try to come to terms with their diversity. Data processing is in the form of text. Therefore, the qualitative research method will be used in an attempt to solve these problems. These will be further elaborated on in the section on research design.

1.11 THE RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Welman and Kruger (1999:46), research design is a plan whereby the researcher requests people to participate, and then collect information from them.
The study will be descriptive, because no generalised conclusions can be drawn from the responses gathered. Maree (2007:4) states that descriptive studies make no attempt to develop statistically valid samples, but intend rather to “develop an understanding of the meanings imparted by the respondents”. Fox and Bayat (2007:70) state that whatever technique is used to collect data, the concern is not merely to describe what is observed, but to search in an inductive way for consistent regularities and recurring patterns.

This research will follow a phenomenological paradigm. The interpreted reality by respondents on the circumstances is based on their own understanding, memory and feelings. Leedy and Ormrod (2001:153) describe a phenomenological study as a study that attempts to understand people’s perceptions, perspectives, and understandings of a particular situation. Adams and van Manen, in Given (2008:617), explain that “…the phenomenological attitude keeps us reflectively attentive to the ways human beings live through experiences in the immediacy of the present that is only recoverable as an elusive past”.

1.12 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

O’Leary (2004:102) states that a population is the total membership of a defined class of people, objects or events; and the best way to research any population is to gather data from every element within it. In order to do this, one might conduct in-depth research on small, defined and accessible populations.

Neuman (2006:224) says that to define a population, a researcher specifies the unit being sampled, the geographical location and the temporal boundaries of the population. This research will be undertaken in ward committees in the Northern Areas of the NMBM.

In this study, the non-probability sampling approach, where the sample is purposively selected, will be used. Neuman (2006:222) defines purposive sampling as a non-random sample, in which the researcher uses a wide range of methods to locate all possible cases of a highly specific and difficult-to-reach population. For the purposes
of this study, a sample of twenty (20) respondents will be drawn from wards 10 and 11 of the Northern Areas.

This sample will comprise two (2) councillors and eighteen (18) committee members of wards 10 and 11. From each ward, one (1) councillor and eight (8) ward committee members will be interviewed. This sample is selected, because it will be easily accessible, less time will be spent in the field, and the cost involved will be low.

1.13 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Wisker (2001:140) states that the qualitative research method includes the following: interviews (which can be recorded), the researcher taking notes, that is, the researcher relying on his or her memory, or the respondents writing down their answers. For the purposes of this study, the researcher will make appointments with the respondents and will conduct unstructured in-depth interviews to obtain the necessary data. Interviews will be conducted in English by the research and they will be recorded. Handwritten notes will also be taken.

Maree (2007) argues that a phenomenological qualitative research cannot really be triangulated, as this is a measure specific to quantitative research. It is also proposed that qualitative researchers should rather “crystallise” the findings from the data revealed through an in-depth penetration of human understandings.

Taking into consideration the advantages and disadvantages of the various survey methods, the face-to-face interviews will be used and the interview questions will be semi-structured. This data-collection instrument is chosen because Welman and Kruger (1999:7) stated that the verbal encounter between the researcher and the respondents relies heavily on interviews.

The secondary information will be obtained from journal articles, books, local government publications, legislation and policies, the Internet, as well as newspapers – to discover meaning once the researcher becomes immersed in the data.
1.14 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Neuman (2006:458) holds the view that qualitative researchers examine patterns of similarities and differences across cases; and then they try to come to terms with their diversity. This method would be best suited for this study.

According to Given (2008:867), thematic analysis is a descriptive strategy that facilitates the research for patterns of experience within a qualitative data set. In this study, the data will be analysed by using the thematic approach to data analysis. The researcher will search for commonalities among the data collected; and the interpretations will be based thereon.

The data from the interviews will be captured by means of manual note-taking and audio recording. The data analysis will bring out the different themes as evidence to present a coherent and consistent picture.

1.15 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

All research ethics will be taken into consideration. Participants will be informed that their participation is voluntary and that anonymity is guaranteed. Permission to conduct the research will be requested in writing from the Constituency Office of the NMBM to interview municipal officials and councillors, as well as members of the public at public meetings.

Permission to record the interviews will be sought from the participants. Ethical clearance from the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University’s Faculty of Higher Degrees Committee will also be sought for this study.

1.16 PROPOSED CHAPTER OUTLINE

This study is provisionally planned to include the following chapters:
CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION
This is a general introduction to the study. It consists of an introduction, a problem statement, a hypothesis, research methodology and design, as well as data collection and analysis.

CHAPTER TWO: AN OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
This chapter deals with an overview of the concepts and theory of community development.

CHAPTER THREE: THE ROLE OF WARD COMMITTEES AND COUNCILLORS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
This chapter will examine the role of the ward councillors and the ward committee structures in community development.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION
This chapter focuses on the research methodology of the study. The data collection instruments, data collection procedure and analysis, and the interpretation of the data will be given.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
This chapter deals with the conclusions and the recommendations.

1.17 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The effectiveness of community development as well as the inclusivity of all stakeholders through the ward committee structures in the NMBM was dealt with in order to conceptualise the impact on council decision-making. The following chapter will provide the reader with an overview of community participation in the context of community development. It will furthermore conduct a literature review on community development with the focus on people’s participation.
CHAPTER TWO
AN OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Adherence to the principle of community development emphasises the importance of local community participation, ownership, self-determination, empowerment, and capacity-building, where the CDW plays a facilitative role. Thus, community development requires working with the grassroots communities to give them a voice, to have a say in what the various public sector planners and decision-makers have in store for them. Also, to make grassroots communities believe that though they are poor and disempowered, they also have rights, because it is about community ownership, self-determination and social justice.

The main aim of this chapter is to conduct a literature review to give an overview on community development, to explain concepts and the theory of community development. The first section of this study will give an overview of community participation in the context of community development. The second section will provide the empowerment of ward committees for community development at the local government sphere. The third section will discuss the forms of participation and engagement. The fourth section will present the rules and strategies for public participation, the international experiences as well as the South African legislative framework. The main factor that influences the process of community development is community participation. Thus, it is of vital importance to focus on people’s participation process in community development activities.

2.2 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In addressing the injustices of past development efforts, the South African government has adopted a people-centred approach (Davids et al., 2005:18). Theron (2005:120) describes this approach as a shifting of interventions towards the public, and away from objects, delivery and production. This approach aims to
enhance the public’s skills and capacity by encouraging their participation in their own development process (Theron, 2005:120).

Ife (2006:27-28) argues that community development should encompass all aspects of human activity and interaction. From his critical social work perspective, he sees community development as being made aware of their rights and responsibilities in society (Ife, 2006:14).

Cheetham (2002:14) says that the role of participation in community development is very important, and community development cannot take place if there is no participation by the community. The concept of participation is the main indicator of community development. Christenson (1989:3-14) defined community development as a group of people in a locality initiating a social action process that seeks to empower individuals and groups of people by providing these groups with skills they might need to effect change in their own communities.

Basic to community development is the ability to mobilise people for involvement through participation. People of the community should actively participate in community change (Cary, 1970:47&69). Chambers (1983), Korten (1990) and Burkey (1998) have for long been known as great proponents of people participation in development programmes. More recently, however, other writers have endorsed the importance of public participation in improving the livelihoods of the poor.

Neefjes (2000:99), for example, refers to participation and the associated term empowering as words which express the idea that the poor and excluded people get more influence over their lives and livelihoods when involved in development programmes.

Kumar (2002:27) reiterates this view, and notes that popular participation has become sought after the world over, and that it holds numerous advantages in development projects aimed at the poor.

In the context of South African local government, a community is defined by a ward system, which is a geographic area, into which a municipality is divided for, amongst
other purposes, those of election (Local Government Municipal Systems Act, 2000, Act 32 of 2000). Within this context, participation refers to people’s involvement in processes that affect them.

Participation is a complex and ongoing process, through which people are enabled to exercise varying degrees of influence over their development and governance issues, and over those activities that affect their lives. Kellerman, in Kotze (1997:52), contended that merely taking part passively in externally designed and managed activities does not in itself represent participation. Rather, participation and engagement must be assessed in terms of the measure of influence people exercise over development and governance activities affecting their lives.

Cloete and Wissink (2000:77) are of the view that development is both a subjectively and objectively sustainable increase in the quality of life of an individual or a community.

Torado (1997:76), in turn, sees and implies that:

- Development is not an end product, but a continuous process of improvement in living conditions;
- Development has both subjectively perceived and objectively determinable dimensions (a state of mind and a physical reality);
- Development can be durable, which implies that it must empower people to improve their own conditions themselves over a long period, in a relatively independent way; and
- Development needs a balanced or synchronised improvement in different policy sectors (social, cultural, economic, political, organisational and technological) and in the area of basic life-sustaining and higher-order needs, in order to be durable.

Torado (1994:16-19) adopts a similar concept of development and holds the view that development must represent change, through which an entire social system moves away, from a condition of life widely perceived as unsatisfactory, towards a condition of life regarded materially and spiritually as “better”. In this regard, at least
three core values should serve as a conceptual basis and practical guideline in understanding the meaning of development, namely:

- To increase the availability and widen the distribution of basic life-sustaining goods and services, such as food, water, shelter and protection;
- To raise the levels of living, including higher incomes, the provision of jobs, improved education and greater attention to cultural values; and
- To expand the range and economic choices available to individuals by liberating them from dependence and servitude, resulting from alienating material conditions of life.

Meiring and Parsons (1994:32-33) state that development must be aimed at:

- Eliminating poverty caused by a lack of the means to provide for food, clothing, housing and other material needs;
- Eliminating social problems; and
- Empowering each citizen to attaining a good and specific standard of living.

According to Cloete and Wissink (2000:78), the level of development in a community is determined by the initial starting conditions, such as natural conditions, or events caused by policy decisions and the influence of public participation.

Bekker (1996:45) argues that the rationale for community participation is that the public should participate in the developmental planning at the initial stage, rather than after officials have become committed to particular choices and stages. The following aspects apply here:

- Provision of information to citizens;
- Obtaining information from and about citizens;
- Improving public decisions, programmes and projects;
- Enhancing the acceptance of public projects;
• Altering political power patterns and resource allocations;
• Delaying or avoiding complicated political decisions.

The importance of public participation in improving the livelihoods of the poor is emphasised by Neefjes (2000:99), who refers to participation and the associated term empowering, as words which express the idea that the poor and excluded people get more influence over their lives and livelihoods when involved in developmental programmes. Mogale (2003:225) notes that the notion of public participation has “widespread common-sense appeal and impact”. He agrees that public participation leads to an expectation that transformation in the system will take place to the benefit of those towards whom development projects are targeted. The African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation (1990), as well as The United Nations Agenda 21 of 1992, both point to the importance of popular participation in shaping national and community development policies and programmes.

Current debates on the deepening and consolidation of democracy have a distinct bias towards the introduction of participatory approaches that will enable citizens to take up their citizenship rights (Esau, 2006:1). Esau maintains that this process requires that citizens become more engaged with the state, in order to enhance state responsiveness, to ensure watchfulness and accountability, and to influence policy that affects their livelihood.

Gildenhuys and Knipe (2000:126) are of the view that the largest possible participation in public decision-making can be secured by the acceptance of the principle that each and every citizen of a country has the democratic right to participate in public decision-making in all those areas that influence his or her life, and this includes almost all activities of government. Further, Pollitt (2007:99) maintains that public participation is the most active form of relationships, where citizens are directly engaged with the decision-making process.

This is a two-way process, usually with more scope for influencing the agenda than consultation. In genuine participation, power is shared between the public authority and the participating citizens.
Hilliard and Kemp (1999:57) say that community participation is fundamental, in order to sustain democracy and promote good governance. If public participation is widespread, it will help keep the public functionaries accountable to the people, and will prevent politicians from making policies that are damaging to the general welfare of society. Put differently, public participation is crucial to ensure that the “voices” of the people are heard, and that the needs and wishes of the public are duly acted upon.

De Beer and Swanepoel (1998:23) argued that community participation in development is more important than the participation of other actors. It is also said that local people should be the main actors in the development of their community, because they are going to be directly affected by the process; and therefore, they must be in the forefront of shaping and determining the direction of their own developmental agenda.

De Beer and Swanepoel (2000:129) also state that governments are also role-players in the development of local communities. Government can support community development in different ways – like providing financial assistance, although communities need to be self-reliant, the poverty of their members still means that outside help is usually indispensable.

Furthermore, the third actor in community development comes in the form of NGOs and also the community CDW, who is referred to as the group organiser, group animator or change agent. CDWs act as consultants to the local people.

De Beer and Swanepoel (2000:135) assert that community development is a way of strengthening civil society by prioritising the actions of communities and their perspectives in the development of social, economic and environmental policy. It seeks the empowerment of local communities, taken to mean both geographical communities, communities of interest and communities organising around specific themes of policy initiatives. It strengthens the capacity of people as active citizens through their community group, organisation and networks; and the capacity of
institutions and agencies (public, private and non-governmental) to work in dialogue with citizens – to shape and determine change in their communities.

Kahn, Madue and Kalema (2011:142) are convinced that in South Africa, the government’s motivation for partnerships with civil society organisations arises from the recognition of its own human, financial and technical constraints in delivering services and development. A central element of South Africa’s policies is the notion of partnerships to foster cost-effective and participatory service delivery.

Kahn et al. (2011:142) furthermore proceed on the supposition that the South African government is in the process of implementing policies and legislation to regulate interactions between the state and civil society, among others, policies like:

- The Growth, Employment and Redistribution strategy (GEAR), which makes provision for social compact (wage, price and productivity agreement), and emphasises partnerships as a vehicle for service delivery and economic growth.
- The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), which sets the empowerment of institutions of civil society as a fundamental aim of the government’s development approach. This policy introduces structured consultation processes at all levels of government, to ensure participation in policy-making, planning and project implementation.

Community development plays a crucial role in supporting active democratic life by promoting the autonomous voice of the disadvantaged and vulnerable communities. It has a set of core values/principles covering human rights, social inclusion, equality and respect for diversity, as well as a specific skills and knowledge base.

The Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000) highlights that the work of the ward committees, therefore, is to understand development in the right context, and to engage the community in the identification of their needs and prioritising them against scarce resources. People are empowered through community participation, by creating the space for them to engage in developing their skills and abilities to
negotiate their needs in the face of forces that often appear to obstruct and discourage them.

Community participation does not take place in a vacuum; but it is subject to the political, social and economic influences within which it occurs.

Consequently, to ensure meaningful participation, procedures for democratic decision-making should be created at the local sphere. This would enable the community to engage in and contribute to decisions affecting them. The developmental approach, therefore, aims to re-direct municipalities away from the silo approach of only upgrading physical infrastructure – to one that addresses community needs in an integrated manner, as intended by the Integrated Development Plan (IDP).

Communities are not homogeneous, which makes it difficult to reach agreements on aspects of needs and vision, and ways of addressing them. Fung and Wright (2001:67) argue that the enhanced participation of people will lead to more accountability and responsiveness; and therefore, the level of democracy will improve – not only at the local level, but also nationally.

Furthermore, grassroots democracy is about empowering people to participate in various ways in the realisation of their own wellbeing and self-fulfilment.

In the South African context, the country’s Constitution in its preamble, echoes the idea of popular participation, when it states that the people of South Africa commit themselves to “laying the foundations for a democratic and open society, in which government is based on the will of the people”. This idea is even more explicit in Section 152(1)(e), where the Constitution mandates the state (through municipalities) to “encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in matters of local government”.

Therefore participation in service delivery is determined by the extent to which community members and beneficiaries take part in decision-making process. It is thus imperative that continuous training programmes be developed and implemented
so that ward committee members understands their roles and responsibilities. The next section will give impetus to the empowerment of ward committees.

2.3 EMPOWERMENT OF WARD COMMITTEES FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Ward committees are important structures established by government to promote participatory democracy. Ababio (2007:620) states that local communities should be educated on the role of ward committees, and what is expected of them. They should be educated on community participation and their role in local governance. They should be made aware of the legislative provisions governing the rights and duties of local communities, as well as the mechanisms, processes and procedures in place to promote community participation.

However, Rubin and Rubin (2001:77) note that empowerment is a psychological experience on the part of individuals, when they believe they can accomplish chosen goals. It also increases political organisational strength, enabling people to carry out their will collectively.

Hence, Ife (1995:214) explains that training is most effective when the people themselves have identified a need for it. It is important for the training programme to be based on the community’s need to ensure that the ward committee structures effectively engage in community participation initiatives.

Thus ward committees are to serve as the link between communities and the councillor to enhance participatory local governance and to assist the ward councillor on matters pertaining to the ward. This will lead to better public participation and engagement.

2.4 FORMS OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Butcher, in Van der Waldt (2007:27), points out that participation should be seen as something broader than just involving “beneficiaries” and “the excluded”, with a focus on wide-ranging forms of engagement by the public in policy formulation and
decision-making in key areas that affect their lives. Participation is an active process, whereby participants take the initiative and action, stimulated by their own thinking and deliberation, and over which they can exert effective control.

Community participation and engagement could be described as the involvement of citizens in a wide range of administrative policy-making activities, including the determination of levels of service, budget priorities, and the acceptability of physical construction projects, in order to support and encourage a sense of cohesiveness within society (Fox & Meyer, 1996:20).

Emmert (2000:58) believes that the lowest form of participation is centred on and limited to the identification of needs and gaps, and that this could potentially create attitudes that view the community in a negative and prejudiced manner.

Mogale (2003:220) clarifies that participation is usually mandated by four groups:

- By voters to ensure democratic accountability;
- By citizens, who through a variety of stakeholder institutions, can contribute to policy processes;
- By consumers and end-users, who can expect “value for money” and affordable services;
- By organised partners engaged in resource mobilisation for developmental objectives.

It can thus be deduced that a suitable environment and conditions are important ingredients for public engagement.

Martin (2004:191-194) argues that public engagement values the right of citizens to have a say in decisions that affect their lives; and it takes on many forms, which include the following:

- Communication: the one-way flow of information from policy makers and managers to the public. Honest and effective communication with the
public is a legitimate and necessary function; and it provides people with the means to access services and engage in an informed dialogue. The public needs clear information about what services are on offer, and when and where – in order to be able to access them.

- Consultation: this involves a two-way flow of information, views and perspectives between policy makers/managers and users/public.
- Co-production: this involves active partnership between providers and the public to develop strategies, to design and to deliver services, and to monitor standards.

Vyas-Doorgapersad and Muller (2006:343) maintain that for democratic government to exist, the public (the citizens) must govern, or at the very least be actively involved in local governance. Without public participation, democratic government will no longer function as a democracy. Vibrant democracy insists, therefore, that those in power must positively encourage public participation. This would require that the right of every citizen to participate in government decisions, policies and actions that directly affect him or her be legally protected.

For the reality of democracy to come to fruition, it is further important that facilities and instruments of participation be accessible to every individual citizen.

Kroukamp (2002:50) affirms that the participation of citizens in government activities and governance structures should always be well organised, so that the rules that are to be followed in the process of participation be established on the basis of sound relationships.

Public participation can therefore be viewed as a kind of assessment tool for determining the extent of democracy in a community.
2.5 RULES AND STRATEGIES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mathur, in Kroukamp (2002:50-51), suggests the following six guiding rules when participation takes place:

- Participation must begin at the lowest level within the community. People at 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 stages of a particular project. Participants from the community must be taken on board from the earliest of pre-preparing exercises, to the development of plans, the design of mechanisms for implementation, and the final stage of implementation.
- Participation is much more than casting a vote or an 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 make 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 cost of another. All the participants involved, and not only the relevant government institution, must deal with what flows from a situation.

These forms, rules and strategies of public participation and engagements are from local, regional, continental and international experiences.

In order to ensure that the needs and aspirations of the people are taken into consideration in the decision-making and implementation processes, there should be constant interaction between political office bearers and communities.
2.6 INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE ON CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Martin (2004:189) elucidates that policy makers in Western democracies appear united in the belief that public engagement offers an important means of rebuilding trust in government – ensuring that the services are responsive to the needs and aspirations of citizens.

Van der Waldt (2007:28) has indicated that established democracies around the world have found that public participation is essential for transparency and accountability in governance. In the United States, several efforts have been made in recent times to maximize public information and participation. It has been assumed that an informed and concerned citizenry is desirable, as a matter of principle (Bekker, 1996:44).

Starling (2005:188) maintains that citizens, as customers of government, are naturally more responsive to public needs than are government officials. Thus, it is not surprising to see government at all spheres trying to facilitate the public participation in the administrative process. He further maintains that the most common forms that institutionalised public participation in the United States assume are the citizen committee as an advisory group, the citizen group as a governing group in a specific policy area, and the idea of neighbourhood government, in which citizens have direct responsibility in a number of policy areas.

Thus, in the South African context, it is undoubtedly that public participation is essential for nurturing our young and emerging democracy, as it sets a good foundation for government and society relations.

2.7 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

According to Van Der Waldt (2007:40), legislation can be regarded as a collection of rules devised and enforced by a government that has authority over the public. It
ensures that government bodies adhere to the spirit and stipulations of particular legislation in the design and execution of policy programmes.

Theron, in Davids et al. (2005:108), points out that engagement signifies an outside agency or agent having the aim of “involving” the beneficiaries. This focuses on involvement, which boils down to an approach, which makes communities part of a top-down, predetermined programme or project that does not lead to empowering and authentic participation. One of the primary objectives of the 1996 Constitution is to protect the individual against the state. The relationship of power between the government and the public is, therefore, determined and arranged by the Constitution.

2.7.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996)

In terms of Section 152(1)(e) of The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), one of the objectives of local government is to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matter of local government.

According to The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), public institutions have a mandate to ensure that all citizens receive the services they require – thereby satisfying their basic needs. Municipalities throughout the country are encouraged to involve the public and community institutions in the affairs of local governance. Public institutions must promote the Bill of Rights, which reflects the nation’s values regarding human dignity, equality and freedom, and upholds the principles enshrined in the 1996 Constitution Section 152(1)(e).

Section 152(1), furthermore, provides an integral framework within which development has to take place. The key objects of local government include 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; and
• Encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government.


The White Paper on Local Government (1998:17) defines developmental local government as government committed to working with citizens and groups within the community, to find sustainable ways of meeting their social, economic and material needs, and improving their quality of life.

The White Paper on Local Government (1998), clarifies that municipalities are required to develop mechanisms to ensure citizens’ participation in the formulation, implementation and decision-making, and also as a stepping stone between the Constitution and the Municipal Structures and System Acts.

Putu (2006:11) states that The White Paper on Local Government (1998) puts forward the vision of a developmental local government, which centres on working with local communities to find sustainable ways to meet their needs and improve the quality of their lives. The White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service (1997) Section 6.1 explains that the public service alone cannot develop a truly service-oriented culture without the active participation of the broader community. Thus, the current government has provided a legal framework that necessitates the establishment and institutionalisation of ward committees as vehicles to entrench participatory governance at grassroots level.

The White Paper on Local Government (1998) provides a new vision of a developmental local governance system. It suggests ways in which municipalities across the country can engage the public and community institutions in the affairs of the municipality in their capacities as voters, citizens affected by municipal policies, consumers and end-users of municipal services, and partners in mobilizing resources for the development of a municipal area.

It also set the tone for the transformation of local government. The three inter-related approaches that can assist municipalities to fulfil their developmental mandate are
identified. These include integrated development planning, performance management and working together with local citizens and partners.

Furthermore, civil society’s participation is strengthened through various mechanisms and key variables. This includes the following:

- Forums initiated from within or outside municipalities – to allow for the initiation of policies and participation in monitoring and evaluation.
- Structured stakeholder involvement in certain council committees.
- Participatory budgeting initiatives aimed at linking community priorities to programmes.
- Focus-group participatory action research on needs and values.
- Support for the organisational development of associates, where skills and resources for participation are less developed.


Chapter 4 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000) requires that municipalities involve the public in the IDP process. According to Pycroft, in Van Der Waldt (2007:98), this Act outlines an integrated approach to address the existing system’s weaknesses and the integration of the municipal budget, including the performance management system. Section 25(1) of the Act requires all municipalities to adopt a single, inclusive plan for the development of the municipality that:

- Links, integrates and co-ordinates plans, and takes into account proposals for the development of the municipality.
- Aligns the available resources and capacity with the implementation of the plan.
- Forms the policy framework and general foundation on which annual budgets must be based.
- Is compatible with national and provincial development plans and planning requirements.
It is therefore incumbent upon municipalities to determine methods to provide for participation in the drafting process and the review of the integrated development plan.

2.8 THE RELEVANCE OF BATHO PELE PRINCIPLES TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The White Paper on Local Government (1998) notes that the Batho Pele (“People First”) White Paper issued by the Minister for Public Service and Administration, which is a commitment to involve people in processes of consultation and information-sharing for proper service delivery outcomes. Given the above, the following questions arise:

- Does the shift in the development paradigms impact on development processes?
- How has the emphasis on efficiency and value for money, rather than community participation, affected service delivery for poverty alleviation and general community development?
- What are the changing roles of the various agents of development, and what impact do these roles have on community development?

The principles of Batho Pele commit all municipal officials to quality service delivery, to the setting of and striving for internationally recognised service standards and to honest and transparent communication with the country’s citizens. More interactive participation is needed by municipalities with communities.

2.9 CONCLUSION

People’s participation in community development activities is viewed as a process whereby individuals are involved in initiating, deciding, planning, implementing and managing the group and its activities. To overcome the common problems, people need the process of social development to seek out ways to meet their collective needs and expectations: even though, participation is a dynamic process and it is difficult to predict or even to quantify using a standard “measurement”.

31
Participation is rather moulded by, and originates from, individual's experiences in participating. The following chapter will provide the reader with the roles of ward committee members and councillors in community development.
CHAPTER THREE
THE ROLE OF WARD COMMITTEES AND COUNCILLORS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter an overview of community participation in the context of community development, participation, self determination, empowerment and capacity-building were discussed and against this background, the role of ward committees and councillors became essential to discuss in this chapter.

International experience has shown that local government was deliberately created to bring government to the people. Knipe, Van der Walt, Van Niekerk, Burger and Neil (2002:107) state that in South Africa ward committees are regarded as special-purpose vehicles for community participation. They are expected to establish effective and continuous communication with and between the community, the ward councillor and the municipality.

Because of the impracticality of each community taking part in every decision the municipality has to make, a representative system had to be developed, such as the election of councillors and Proportional Representative (PR) councillors who would represent the various communities.

In terms of Section 73(2)(a) of the Local Government: Municipal Structures,1998 (Act 117 of 1998), the role of the ward councillor is to represent that ward in the council; and s/he must be the chairperson of the ward committee. On 18 May 2011, the residents of the NMBM elected sixty (60) ward councillors and sixty (60) party representatives (PR) to the total of one hundred and twenty (120) councillors. According to the Herald of 17 May 2011, a PR councillor is elected by the political party through its leadership lists, and is primarily accountable to their political party.

Both PR and ward councillors can be elected to serve on the mayoral committee, which has twelve (12) members. Meiring and De Villiers (2001:94) affirm that the
work of the councillor is always time-bound and linked specifically to a municipality or a ward.

The focus of this chapter is to harness in-community development and participation through the ward committee structures, and more importantly to inculcate ownership to ensure sustainability. There will also be an evaluation of the effectiveness of ward committees, in an attempt to ensure that these structures have the necessary capacity and resources required to fulfil their envisaged roles, as the voice of the community. This chapter will also examine how there are conduits for community involvement in the local sphere of government.

3.2 THE ESTABLISHMENT, POWERS AND DUTIES OF WARD COMMITTEES

In terms of Section 72 of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998), only metropolitan municipalities and local municipalities of certain types may have ward committees. In establishing a municipality, it must comply with, inter alia, Section 73(1) and (2) of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998, which stipulates that:

- If a metropolitan or local council decides to have ward committees, it must establish a ward committee for each ward in the municipality;
- A ward committee must consist of:
  - The councillor representing that ward in the council, who must also be the chairperson of the ward committee; and
  - Not more than ten (10) other persons.

According to Section 73(3)(a) of the above Act, the other ten (10) ward committee members must consist of elected representatives from:

- Women’s organisations in the ward;
- Other targeted groups in the ward (youth, disabled and the like); and
- Representatives from voting districts in the ward.
Shaidi (2007:53-54) states that there are a number of challenges that face certain ward committees in the NMBM, such as:

- Insufficient training regarding municipal issues and the role and responsibilities of ward committee members;
- Absence of a working relationship with community structures;
- Interference by politicians in the implementation of development projects;
- Community needs that exceed budget provisions;
- Incorrect understanding of the roles of ward committees, resulting in confusion and misunderstanding in the community; and
- Insufficient resources, limiting ward committees in discharging their role of public participation.

Shaidi (2007:54-55) further states that to meet the above-mentioned challenges, the following recommendations were proposed to the NMBM:

- That roles and responsibilities of the ward committee members be clarified, in order to avoid any future confusion and uncertainties with the community;
- Adequate resources be made available to ward committees;
- Relevant and continuous training programmes be developed and implemented, so that ward committee members understood clearly their roles and responsibilities;
- Incentives be given to ward committee members when they exceed their expected targets; and
- That the NMBM should consider introducing a performance management system for ward committees.

According to Section 74 of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998), the Act stipulates that a ward committee 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 this person has such
duties and powers as the metro or local council may delegate to him or her in terms of Section 32 of the Structures Act, 1998.

In this regard, Shaidi (2007:55) says that in order for ward committees to attain a certain level of functionality, adequate provision of financial and infrastructural resources is also essential.

In terms of Section 16 of the Local Government: Municipality Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000), 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:

“(a) Encourage and create conditions for the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality, including in –

i. The preparation, implementation and review of its IDP;

ii. The establishment, implementation and review of its performance management systems;

iii. The monitoring and review of its performance, including the outcomes and impact of such performance;

iv. The preparation of its budget; and

v. Strategic decisions relating to the provision of municipal services.”

These provisions are emphasised again in Sections 16, 17, 29(1)(b), 34, and 42 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act of 2000, as well as in Section 23(1)(a) of the Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act 56 of 2003), which require a municipal council to take cognisance of the views of its local community during the tabling of the annual budget of the municipality.

Shaidi (2007:76) proposes that the following key stakeholders should be actively involved in any ward-based planning processes implemented by municipalities in South Africa:

- Executive Mayor;
- Speaker of the Council;
• Councillors;
• Ward Committees;
• Certain municipal officials;
• Trade Union/Shop stewards and their members;
• The local business sector; and
• Facilitators/Service providers.

In order to represent the broader community in the ward, it was recommended that the following representatives should be nominated from each ward:

• Two (2) ward committee members;
• Two (2) members from special sectors in the ward;
• One (1) representative from the youth sector in the ward;
• One (1) representative from the women’s sector in the ward;
• One (1) representative from the health sector in the ward;
• One (1) representative from the housing sector in the ward;
• One (1) representative from the safety and security sector in the ward; and
• One (1) representative from the sport sector in the ward.

Ward-based planning seeks to broaden and democratise consultation and participation in the local municipality. Smith (2008:13) elucidates, that among others, ward committees should be able to enhance participatory government by collectively organising communities concerning ward jurisdiction. Draai and Taylor (2009:114) affirm that despite the variety of challenges, municipalities that face ward committees should encourage and formulate programmes to promote public participation. This can help ensure that a municipal council is in a better position when making decisions to help facilitate improved service delivery.

It is clear from the above discussions that ward-based planning seeks to broaden and democratise public participation within the local municipality. Public participation is thus, essential in a process that engages communities from the planning to the implementation and the evaluation phases of a particular activity or a project.
3.3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION THROUGH WARD COMMITTEES

The effectiveness of participation has to cover the total policy process, from defining needs and priorities, through to implementation, and finally, to evaluation. The creation of channels for participation and also the skilling of communities have to be addressed in decision-making processes, without divorcing them from their constituencies. The main focus of ward committees should be on how to influence public participation in identifying and prioritising their developmental needs.

Makubalo (2004:109) states that, despite the good intentions of the legislation and policies aimed at promoting ward committee-based participatory democracy, concludes that, in order for ward committees to become more effective, they require more decision-making powers. This concurs with the study and recommendations made by the former Department of Provincial and Local Government, that there is very little delegation of powers to ward committees.

This conservative approach limits ward committees in fulfilling their roles of public consultation and participation. Kaizer (2009:8) presumes that ward committees have been established in more than 80% of the wards countrywide – with the main objective being to enhance participatory democracy at the local government sphere. In practice, ward committees in South Africa ought to operate in the following manner:

- Raise issues about local ward matters to the ward councillor;
- They are the link between the ward councillor and the community;
- They have a say in decisions, projects selection and prioritisation, the IDP, performance management of the municipality and the allocation of funds (budgeting) by the municipality; and
- Engaging with communities and the general public in matters of their local government.

Brynard (2004:45) states that consultative participation usually comprises one of three types of opportunity. Firstly, there is structured participation, which means the formal establishment of one or more citizen bodies with defined prerogatives and
responsibilities, such as advisory committees, and community forums. The members may be chosen by municipalities or some other stipulated process. Secondly, open opportunities exist, which are those limited by time, place and procedure, and are usually focused on one or just a few issues. These include enquiries and hearings, and exhibitions with a chance to comment. Thirdly, there are the informal means that centre on the accessibility of local officials to citizen-initiated comments and advocacy.

Structured participatory bodies can be effective only when they attain legitimacy, and the means wherewith to function. Brynard (2004:46) reasons that an accumulation of expertise is possible if these structured participatory bodies are not merely admitted to occasional participation but enjoy ongoing involvement in a wide range of municipal programmes.

According to Houston, Humphries, Liebenberg and Dichaba (2000:77-78), community involvement in structured municipal bodies could be encouraged through:

- Forums started from within or outside local government, which allow organised formations to initiate policies and/or influence policy formulation, as well as participate in the monitoring and evaluation activities;
- Structured stakeholder involvement in council committees;
- Forums for participatory budgeting initiated with the aim of linking community priorities with capital investment programmes;
- Focus groups involved in participatory action research, which then generate detailed information about a wide range of specific needs and values; and
- Support for the organisational development of associations, especially in poor and marginalised areas, where the skills and resources for participation may be less developed than in better-off areas.

It can, therefore, be deduced that community participation is one of the cornerstones of effective and accountable governance. This can take various forms. Gradually, most municipalities are finding ways to improve community participation. An
important practical approach is to establish structures that will allow for meaningful participation.

Reddy and Maharaj (2008:203) say that ward committees are community-based advisory structures, with the ward councillor as chairman. Given the challenges of service delivery, considerable emphasis has been placed on ward committees as a mechanism to facilitate community participation.

Craythorne (2003:118) holds the view that ward committees are another option contained in the Municipal Structures Act (1998). Only metropolitan and local municipalities established as a type with ward committees, may establish such committees. The object of a ward committee is to ensure that participatory democracy is enhanced in the local government sphere. The ward committee consists of:

- The ward councillor, who is also the chairperson; and
- Not more than ten (10) other persons who are elected members.

The Municipal Structures Act (1998) provides for the establishment of ward committees to assist the ward councillor in understanding the needs and views of the community. A ward committee should consist of up to ten (10) members, who serve as volunteers, to advise the councillor, and may represent a certain sector, such as for instance, women’s groups or ratepayers’ associations, or a geographical area or community within the ward. The ward councillor serves as chair of the ward committee and must hold regular meetings.

Ababio (2007:614) states that ward committees are designed to help achieve developmental goals. As partners in participatory democracy, ward committees are a creation of legislation; and they are obligated to be active partners in municipal functioning, in policy-making and in implementation. Ward committees are representative structures of the community and citizenry; and they liaise with municipalities on aspirations and problems of the inhabitants.
Craythorne (2003:119) asserts that in terms of a ward, a committee may make recommendations directly to the ward councillor, or through the ward councillor, to the council, the executive committee and the mayor of a municipality. This line of communication depends on the quality of the ward councillor. The council may delegate duties and powers to a ward committee.

Theron (2005:128) states that ward committees serve as a two-way communication channel for both government and communities on matters relating to governance and delivery of basic services, thereby ensuring broad-based democracy in their constituencies. This can be achieved via committees, through which communities and community interest groups may raise concerns and needs, and also assist in specific municipal functions.

According to ETHekwini Municipality (2006:25), structures mainly at ward level stipulate that:

- Rules will be developed by the municipality, which it will adopt in order to regulate the establishment and operation of ward committees;
- The legitimate statutory platform for community participation will be the ward committees – with the object of ensuring that participatory democracy in local government is enhanced;
- Ward committees need to act as advisory bodies; they must be independent and impartial; and their functions will have to be performed without fear, favour or prejudice; and
- Community-based planning and other local developmental projects will have to be driven through ward committees.

In terms of Section B of The White Paper on Local Government (1998), developmental local government is defined as local government committed to working with citizens and groups to establish sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs, and to improve the quality of their lives. In order to realise the concept of developmental local government, Section B of The White Paper on Local Government (1998), further stipulates the following key components:
- The characteristics of developmental local government;
- The developmental outcomes of local government; and
- The tools and approaches for developmental local government.

*The White Paper on Local Government* (1998) prescribes that those municipal councillors should promote the involvement of citizens and groups in the design and delivery of municipal programmes. It can, therefore, be argued that developmental local government hinges on public participation. Taken further, in terms of The White Paper (1998:53), the 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 through different stakeholder associations, their views before, during and after the policy-development process, in order to ensure that policies reflect 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 mobilisation of resources for development-for-profit business, NGOs and institutions.

Thus, participation takes place on four levels, namely: as voters, as citizens, as consumers, and as organised partners in service delivery. To achieve:

- The establishment of forums of organised formations, especially in the fields of envisaging and on issue-specific policies;
- Structured stakeholder participation in council committees, especially *ad hoc* issue-related committees;
- Participatory action research with specific focus groups on in-depth information on specific issues; and
- Forming associations (especially for people-marginalised areas).
Chapter 3 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000) outlines the need for public participation and consultation. Chapter 3 also defines the importance of developing a culture of public participation, as well as the mechanisms and processes for public participation. In terms of Section 10G(1)(g) of the Local Government Transition Act, 1993 (Act 209 of 1993), a municipality is obliged to report annually and to receive feedback from its communities regarding the objectives set out in its IDP.

The audited accounts of a municipality are also required to be considered in public at a meeting of the municipal council.

3.4 THE COMPLEMENTARY ROLE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKERS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Chapter 4 of the Municipal Structures Act (1998) states that “the participation of citizens in the structures will revolutionise the way that local governance happens at the metropolitan level. Individual municipalities will be empowered to decide what is best for their situation, with the guidance of national legislation that permits a variety of forms of local participation.”

Furthermore, it was maintained that CDWs, as advocacy planners, must alleviate the following:

- Advocacy planning and democratic practice;
- Preparing the conceptual/theoretical grounding;
- Different forms of capital;
- One’s position on the field;
- Habits, as the relational nexus between reflection and action;
- Doxa as the transformative nexus with alternative possibilities; and
- The methodological significance of Bourdieu’s conceptual repertoire.

Due to the continuity of racism, exclusion and discrimination, CDWs were early in the 21st century introduced by the South African President, in order to fill the gap
between government service and the poor. This would inevitably lead to the supposition that CDWs must make the poor aware of their constitutional rights: such as social grants, housing, and so forth.

CDWs must act as agents of change. According to the South African Management Development Institute (SAMDI, 2005), CDWs are officially mandated to develop and transform communities, and to:

- Inform them on, and assist them to access, the services provided by the government;
- Determine the needs of communities, and communicate these to government;
- Promote networks between community workers and projects to improve service delivery; and
- Compile reports and documents on progress and local issues.

According to the Handbook for Municipal Councillors (2006:121), CDWs and ward committees can build good relations by:

- CDWs supporting ward committees by assisting with the production of reports, minutes, plans, etc.
- CDWs creating awareness of ward committee activities amongst the local constituency and acting as referral agencies.

It is thus important for the ward councillor and ward committees to meet with their local CDWs, and to work on mutually beneficial terms of reference and operating systems. The municipality should support and facilitate co-operation between CDWs and ward committees.

The Department of Public Service and Administration (2007:14) states that as a provincial government assigns CDWs to specific wards, they are not accountable to the municipal structure, but to a provincial structure. Basically, the CDWs assist communities by integrating the functions of all government departments to accelerate
a community’s access to those services. As a result, the ward committees are concerned with the services that a municipality provides, while CDWs are required to ensure that all of the services rendered by the respective spheres of government are integrated into the respective municipality.

3.5 THE ROLE OF WARD COMMITTEES AND COUNCILLORS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

3.5.1 The role of councillors in community development

According to Paradza, Mokwena and Richards (2010:11), the role of the municipal councillor can broadly be defined as follows:

- To provide residents with a progress report explaining the decisions made by the council in committing resources to development projects and programmes affecting the local community;
- To assess whether his/her particular municipality’s programmes and plans are having their intended impact, and whether services are being delivered fairly, effectively and in a sustainable way;
- To determine whether capital projects meet the requirements of the council’s IDP; and
- To maintain close contact with the community, to ensure that the council is informed of all issues on the ground, and to convey important information from the council to the residents.

The South African Local Government Association (SALGA, 2006:59) stipulates seven functions to be fulfilled by councillors:

- To participate in policy-making and monitoring of the effective implementation of policy (incorporating the dual legislation and executive function in terms of the Constitution, as previously mentioned);
- To represent community needs and expectations in an accountable and transparent manner;
• To communicate with the public in view of getting their input into council decisions and to collect information on any serious concerns related to municipal service delivery;

• To fulfil their leadership responsibilities in executive positions, such as that of mayor, executive mayor, member of the executive committee or executive mayoral committee, depending on the category/type of municipality within which they serve;

• To behave ethically, in accordance with the code of conduct contained in Schedule 1 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000;

• To delegate certain council functions to the relevant committees, so as to improve the efficiency of the council’s decision-making process and

• To promote the concept of developmental local government, as stipulated in the legislative framework for local government.

The Handbook for Municipal Councillors (2006:42) affirms that councillors are representatives of their constituents and their immediate needs. They also have the responsibility that the decisions they take must address past imbalances and access to services and opportunities. At the same time, councillors need to be conscious of the impact of these decisions on future generations. This is a large responsibility and needs to be made within a democratic framework that relies on frequent consultation with community members, ward committee members, organised interest groups, and close co-ordination amongst all levels of government – from local to provincial, to national level.

Ward councillors play an extremely important role in promoting democracy, by making sure that community members and organisations have the chance to present their views on any matter to be considered by council. Section 16(1)(a) of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000), asserts that councillors are required to consult with the citizens to deliberate and seek inputs on, inter alia, the budget, the IDP and the performance management system, before these processes can be approved and implemented.
Once again, this implies a management responsibility on the part of councillors. On this basis, one could therefore argue that the benefits of councillors, having not only political leadership responsibilities, but also certain management skills, if municipalities are to be successful in the current environment. Within this context, it is therefore necessary to briefly consider the management versus leadership role of the municipal councillor.

According to the Handbook for Municipal Councillors (2006:120), a ward councillor is directly elected to represent and serve the people in a specific ward, and is the chairperson of the ward committee. The ward councillor should make sure that the interests of all the people in the ward are represented in council, as properly as possible. The ward councillor should be in touch with the issues in the area, understand the key problems and monitor development and service delivery.

In committees, caucus and council meetings the ward councillor is the direct link between the council and the citizens. S/he makes sure that the community is consulted and kept informed on any council decisions, development and budget plans that affect them.

Proportional representation and ward councillors are directly accountable to the communities they serve. Their own personal leadership skills will be visible; and these would affect their ability to lead effectively, professionally and honestly. Furthermore, councillors have a wide range of responsibilities from interacting with their constituencies, inputting into the IDP, participating in municipal committees and environmental planning and generally responding to the social and economic issues of their communities.

It may be argued that government is performance-driven, and that councillors need to internalise and deliver people-centred services in line with the Batho Pele principles. Councillors can assess how well they are serving their communities against the principles of the Batho Pele White Paper of 1997 that stipulates that national and provincial government departments that include:
The eight principles of Batho Pele:

1. Consultation: Citizens should be consulted on the level and quality of public services they receive and, wherever possible, should be given a choice of the services that are offered.

2. Service standards: Citizens should be told what level and quality services they will receive, so that they are aware of what to expect.

3. Access: All citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are entitled.

4. Courtesy: Citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration.

5. Information: Citizens should be given full, accurate information on the public services they are entitled to receive.

6. Openness and transparency: Citizens should be told how national and provincial departments are run, how much they cost, and who is in charge.

7. Redress: If the promised standard of service is not delivered, citizens should be offered an apology, a full explanation and a speedy and effective remedy; and when complaints are made, citizens should receive a sympathetic and positive response.

8. Value for money: Public services should be provided economically and efficiently, in order to give citizens the best possible value for their money.

According to the Handbook for Municipal Councillors (2006:130), councillors can engage with their community in different ways, so as to identify issues that concern them, for instance:

- Ward committees
- Networking and consultation
- Regular meetings
- Information sheets
- Community radio stations and media
- Petitions
The Handbook for Municipal Councillors (2006:134) states that councillors also need to be sensitive to their constituency; and they should ensure that the consultative process is inclusive of:

- Women, elderly people and youth;
- Provision is made for physically challenged constituents;
- The correct protocols are followed when inviting and consulting with traditional leaders;
- Events are held at accessible venues;
- The time of the event is suitable to most constituents;
- The language used must be familiar to most of the constituents.

Cloete (1996:211) proposes that public leaders require skills, which include the ability to identify community needs and to pursue suitable interventions to address those needs, the ability to show sensitivity to the personal circumstances and needs of the community members, and the ability to clearly and regularly communicate information on council decisions and activities. Therefore, to expedite community development, the municipal councillors need to also have the afore-mentioned skills.

3.5.2 The role of ward committees in community development

Tsatsire (2001:37-39) explains that ward committees were established by the NMMM in terms of Chapter 4 of the Structures Act (117 of 1998), in order to ensure active participation by communities in local government affairs. These committees are a key mechanism with which the municipality can communicate with its local community. To promote and enhance efficient and effective service delivery, the ward committee system was introduced by the NMMM in 2001.

These newly established committees are to serve as the link between communities and the council; and their objectives include the following:

- To enhance participatory local governance;
- To assist the ward councillor on matters of the ward;
To contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of all its residents;
To make recommendations to the ward councillor, or to the other structures of the metropolitan council; and
To engage residents in matters of local governance.

A council may have a detailed policy on a ward councillor's responsibilities as ward committee chair, specifying the number of meetings, and the type of reports to be made to the ward committee. Ward councillors are also expected to hold regular public meetings in the ward, and can interact directly with any interest group, even if that group is not represented on the ward committee.

Ward committees are, in most instances, the primary method of ensuring local community participation in the working of the municipality. There is a legal requirement for the municipality to include local communities, through the ward committees, in setting key performance indicators and performance targets, and to ensure community involvement in monitoring and reviewing these.

When determining the key performance areas of municipality, there may be competing interests from the various municipalities, depending on the issues that they consider to be the most important. The performance management system should incorporate as many of these interests as are viable and sustainable (Handbook for Municipal Councillors, 2006:107).

The Ward Committee Resource Book (2005:52) states that a ward committee can work with communities and other stakeholders to improve services. They can advise on services that are appropriate, sustainable and affordable. According to the Ward Committee Resource Book (2005:52) committees can help to find solutions that will work in the long term and that suit the needs of the community. This includes:

- Encouraging the community to pay for services;
- Taking care of the infrastructure;
- Setting up community partnerships;
- Meeting the needs of the poorest members of the community;
• Monitoring levels of service; and
• Helping to evaluate service providers.

The Handbook for Municipal Councillors (2006:53) declares that a ward committee can play an important role in three stages of performance management:

• Planning – A ward committee works closely with the councillor to identify priorities, and to ensure that these priorities are included in budget proposals and project plans.
• Follow-up – A ward committee can request regular reports on projects and services.
• Yearly performance reviews – council should report to ward committees and communities on their budget and performance objectives.

Shaidi (2007:81) is convinced that the ward committee system in NMBM is still faced by a number of challenges, ranging from a lack of clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of ward committees amongst ward committee members, to a lack of resources, and apathy in community participation on the side of the community.

3.6 CONCLUSION

Development and changing people’s lives in a democratic society is inconceivable without community participation. Community participation has a key role to play in enhancing development and effective service delivery to local communities. From the study it can be deduced that in order for ward committees to serve as effective mechanisms to speed up service delivery, they must be adequately capacitated with the necessary skills and resources with regards to service delivery objectives. A close relationship is needful between local government, general public, municipal officials, ward committees and ward councillors in the service delivery process.
CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter dealt with the role of ward committees and councillors in community development and participation and more importantly to inculcate ownership to ensure sustainability. Furthermore it examined community involvement in the local sphere of government.

This chapter focuses on research methodology. It provides the research method which was employed and the research design as it is best suited for this study, reason being that it concerned with the experiences of the citizens of the Northern Areas in Port Elizabeth with regard to community development at local level of government.

It is clear that ward committees have been the focus of considerable attention by government, civil society and an attempt to ensure that these structures have the necessary capacity and resources required to fulfil their roles as the voice of communities. The main idea for ward committees is to supplement the role of elected councillors by being the bridge between communities, politicians and the administrative structures of municipalities.

Many observers are critical about ward committees, stating that most committees in the country are not functioning as they should and are seen as highly partisan structures aligned political party agendas.

This chapter sets out to develop a deeper understanding of the functions and value of ward committees.
4.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Babbie and Mouton (2001:75) believes that research methodology focuses on the process and the kind of tools and procedures used while research design looks towards what the end product will be. In Leedy’s (1989:91) view, methodology is an operational framework within which the facts are placed so that their meaning may be seen more clearly. According to Welman and Kruger (1999:39), research methodology refers to the methods, techniques and procedures that will be employed in the process of implementing the research plan. O’Sullivan and Rassel (1995:36) believe that qualitative research methods produce verbal data, which is difficult to convert to numbers. Researchers may draw on both quantitative and qualitative research methods to conduct any one study. Qualitative research is defined by its extensive use of verbal information, its preference for developing full information on relatively few cases and its consideration of the unique features of each case.

As this study seeks to investigate community development through the ward committee structures within the Northern Areas of the NMBM, the qualitative method was best suited because it is more descriptive and provided a better understanding of how the communities view the said process. The use of qualitative research allowed for the richness of personal experiences and meaning of respondents to be explored. Neuman (2006:458) holds the view that qualitative researchers examine patterns of similarities and differences across cases and try to come to terms with their diversity. Data processing is in the form of text.

Anderson and Taylor (2000:35) affirms that qualitative research is research that is somewhat less structured yet focused on a question being asked. It is furthermore stated that this type of research does not make extensive use of statistical methods, and it is more interpretive and tends to have greater depth.

In this study, the qualitative research method was used. Fox and Bayat (2007:65) state that qualitative research is the predominant paradigm of research in the social science. Neuman (2000:7) states that qualitative research methods consider data in terms of words, pictures or objectives. Marlow (1998:10) states that qualitative information involves the non-numerical examination of phenomena using words
instead of numbers, and focuses on the underlying meanings and patterns of relationships.

Welman and Kruger (1999:186) accept that qualitative research methods are particularly orientated towards exploration, discovery and inductive logic. No hypotheses are designed nor are any theory-building exercises performed. Data is collected through observations, interviews and other qualitative methods. The product of the research is a new model, theory or hypothesis (Welman & Kruger, 2001:5).

Neuman (1994:317) seems inclined towards the idea and summarises the following about qualitative research:

- Hypotheses are frequently undeclared or merely in a form of a research goal.
- Concepts are in the form of themes, motifs, generalisations and taxonomies. Concepts can be interpreted in a number of ways.
- The data is in the form of words from documents, observations or transcripts.
- Theory can be casual or non-casual and is often inductive.
- Research procedures are particular and replication is very rare.
- Analysis proceeds by extracting themes or generalisations from evidence and organising data to present a coherent and consistent picture.

Singleton (1988:4) explains that knowledge of methods can benefit one as both a consumer and producer. The nature of the data and the problem for research dictate the research methodology. If the data is verbal, the methodology is qualitative and if it is numerical, the methodology is quantitative.

4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Welman and Kruger (1999:46), research design is a plan whereby the researcher requests people to participate and collect information from them. The
study is descriptive because no generalised conclusions are drawn from the responses gathered. Maree (2007:4) states that descriptive studies make no attempt to develop statistically valid samples, but intend rather to “develop an understanding of the meanings imparted by the respondents”. Fox and Bayat (2007:70) state that whatever technique is used to collect data, the concern is not merely to describe what is observed, but to search in an inductive way for consistent regularities and recurring patterns.

This research will follow a phenomenological paradigm. The interpreted reality by respondents about circumstances is based on their own understanding, memory and feelings. Leedy and Ormrod (2001:153) describe a phenomenological study as a study that attempts to understand people’s perceptions, perspectives, and understandings of particular situation.

Neuman (2006:396) clarifies that a great deal of what researchers do in the field is to pay close attention, watch, and listen carefully, and this will add value to this study as the researcher would be able to note the emotions of communities where the public meetings will be held, as well as that of the municipal officials and the politicians through observing their behaviour.

4.4 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

Welman and Kruger (2005:46) say that population is the study which may be individuals, groups, organisations, human products and events or conditions to which they are exposed. Normally the size of the population determines the practicality of whether to include all members of the population or not. The research population for the study is councillors and ward committee members of ward 10 and 11 of the NMBM.

O'Leary (2004:102) states that a population is the total membership of a defined class of people, objects or events and the best way to research any population is to gather data from every element within it. In order to do this, you might conduct in-depth research on small, defined and accessible populations.
Neuman (2006:224) says that to define a population, a researcher specifies the unit being sampled, the geographical location and the temporal boundaries of the population. This research was undertaken in ward committees in the Northern Areas of the NMBM.

In this study, the non-probability sampling where the sample is purposively selected was used. Neuman (2006:222) defines purposive sampling as a non-random sample in which the researcher uses a wide range of methods to locate all possible cases of a highly specific and difficult-to-reach population. For purposes of this study, a sample of twenty (20) respondents was drawn from wards 10 and 11 of the Northern Areas. This sample constituted two (2) councillors and eighteen (18) committee members of wards 10 and 11. From each ward one (1) councillor and eight (8) ward committee members were interviewed. This sample was selected because it was easily accessible, less time was spent on the field and the cost involved was low.

4.5 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Mouton (1996:107) contends that data collection methods refers to the way in which data has been collected or some of its intrinsic properties or is the way a researcher is going to collect data. According to Fox and Bayat (2007:71), collecting data involves various processes. Each of these processes is pursued in a different way, depending on the particular field or discipline and the methodology selected.

Wisker (2001:140) states that the qualitative research method includes the following: interviews (which can be recorded), the researcher taking notes, that is, the researcher relying on his or her memory, or the respondents writing down their answers. For purposes of this study, the researcher made appointments with the respondents and conducted structured in-depth interviews to obtain the necessary data from respondents. Interviews were conducted in English by the researcher and they were recorded. Handwritten notes were also taken.

Taking into consideration the advantages and disadvantages of the various survey methods, face-to-face interviews was used. This data collection instrument was
chosen because Welman and Kruger (1999:7) states that the verbal encounter between the researcher and the respondents relies heavily on interviews.

The various forms of data collection include observations, interviews, printed material and audio-visual material. In qualitative research, it is seldom found that only one of these forms is employed (Fox & Bayat, 2007:72).

According to Fox and Bayat (2007:7), interviews may be conducted on a one-to-one basis or in focus groups and it could contain between four and twelve people. The tradition of inquiry usually determines the form of interview. The views are recorded of a small number of individuals who have experienced a specific phenomenon. It is furthermore stated that a qualitative interview differs from ordinary conversation in the following ways:

- A qualitative interview is a research methodology and a considered way of learning about people’s thoughts, feelings and experiences. The researcher eventually processes and analyses the data gained through qualitative interviews. The outcomes are also shared with interested parties by way of publication.
- A qualitative interview may be conducted between strangers, as well as between acquaintances.
- Qualitative interviews are guided by the interviewer and typically contain a limited number of questions and requests to interviewees in order that these may be explored and analysed in-depth. Interviewees are encouraged to reflect in detail on events experienced by them and it is known as probing.

Conducting a qualitative interview and actually hearing what people are saying demand skills beyond those required for ordinary conversation and require considerable experience. Over and above a required set of skills, it also requires a typical philosophy and an approach comprising the following aspects:

- Understanding is achieved by encouraging people to describe their worlds on their own terms and in their own words.
• Interviewing involves a relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee that imposes obligations to both parties.

• A point of departure to assist in defining what is interesting and what is ethical. This assist in providing standards for judging the quality of research, the courtesy of the interviewing relationship, and completeness and accuracy of the research report. Therefore, an interview supplies the philosophy related to qualitative research and consequently provides the foundation for the more technical skills required in the interviewing process (Fox & Bayat, 2007:74).

Individual interviews were conducted and two sets of interviews were conducted with two (2) ward councillors and twenty (20) ward committee members.

Schnetler, Stokes, Herbst, Dixon and Gildenhuys (1989:16) state that individual interviews are usually conducted at the home or office of the respondent. By using this type of data collection method, it allows the interviewer to communicate by asking questions using voice, body language, facial expressions and allow the interviewee to make use of voice, body language, facial expressions to formulate his or her response.

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:111) identified three advantages of individual interviews as a method for data collection. Firstly, this form of data collection can be administered to illiterate respondents. Because the interviewer reads the question and writes down the response, the respondent does not have to be able to read or write. Secondly, the interviewer has the opportunity to further explain a question or words in a question if he or she senses that the respondent does not fully understand the question. Thirdly, by using the interview method, the interviewer can ensure that all the questions are answered, and that difficult questions are not left out. This is made possible due to the fact that the interviewer is personally administering the questionnaire. A further advantage of the interview is that it has the highest responses rate of all data collection methods (Neuman, 1994:245). Lastly, an important advantage to be obtained from interviewing is the personal contact and interaction between the interviewer and the respondent during the interview process (Jackson, 1995:122).
Jackson (1995:122) holds that there are two major disadvantages to the individual interview. Firstly, using the individual interview as a survey method is one of the most expensive methods of survey. Secondly, it is a very time consuming method of data collection. An interviewer can only handle a limited number of respondents per day and therefore time becomes a limitation. This disadvantage unfolds into an additional disadvantage. In order to reduce the time constraint, the researcher can make use of more interviewers. These interviewers need to be sufficiently trained. Inconsistent responses to certain questions may arise (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:111). Lastly, interviewers may be reluctant to visit neighbourhoods they are not familiar with (Emory & Cooper, 1991:320-321). This means that samples can be limited to selected geographical areas, which could lead to the increase in sample error.

According to Bekker (1998:18), 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.

4.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Babbie and Mouton (2003:520), an ethical issue arises out of our interaction with other people, other beings and the environment especially where there is potential for, or is, a conflict of interests. The scientist has the right to the research 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.

Singleton, Straits, Straits and McAllister (1998:44) states that 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.

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 & Higson-Smith, 1995:100).

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. The handling of subjects’ identities is an important ethical consideration (Babbie & Mouton, 2003:525).

In this study, all research ethics were taken into consideration. Participants were informed that their participation is voluntary and that anonymity is guaranteed. 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. The two techniques of anonymity and confidentiality assist the
A respondent may be considered anonymous when the researcher cannot identify a given response with the given respondent.

Singleton et al. (1998:448) identify freedom of choice as another ethical issue which was considered in this study. They further point out that 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.

Permission to conduct the research was requested in writing from the Constituency Office of the NMBM to interview ward councillors and members of ward committees of wards 10 and 11. Ethics clearance from the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University’s Faculty Higher Degrees Committee was also sought for this study.

The foremost ethical rule of social research is that it brings no harm to researchers’ 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 & Mouton, 2001:522). For purposes of this study, permission to record the interviews was sought from the participants. According to Terreblanche and Durrheim (1998:66), obtaining consent from participants is not merely the singing 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.

4.7 DESCRIPTION AND LOCALITY OF WARDS 10 AND 11

The Municipal Structure Act, 1998 (Act No 117 of 1998) introduce the concept of ward committees. Part 4 of Chapter 4 of this Act sets out the composition and election of ward committees, as well as a framework for the powers and function of
committees, the term of office of committee members and procedures for dealings with vacancies and the dissolution of committees. According to the Act, ward committees consist of ten (10) individuals plus the ward councillor who, according to the Act, must be the chairperson of the committee. Municipalities are required to make rules regulating the procedure to elect members onto the ward committee. Women should be equitably represented, and a diversity of interests needs to be represented on the committee.

Very important, the Structures Act limits the statutory powers and functions of ward committees to those of advisory bodies. Then also, Section 74 of the Act states that a ward committee may make recommendations on any matter affecting its ward to the ward councillor or, through the councillor, to the council, executive committee, Mayor or sub-council. Ward committees can also have any duties and powers delegated to them by the municipal council.

Ward 10 constitutes of Gelvandale, Gelvan Park, Parkside, Helenvale, Springdale and part of Schauderville that borders on the periphery of Gelvan Park. The Democratic Alliance (DA) ward councillor has been a councillor since 2006. Ward 11 is based around Schaudervile, Korsten, Algoa Park, Young Park, Marais Township, Sidwell, Holland Park and Kensington. The DA councillor is now serving his third term in office. Both wards 10 and 11 have high level of poverty and unemployment rates. Service delivery in these wards is very poor.

4.8 PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

An in-depth qualitative study of a small sample was conducted to investigate how they function and to understand the reasons for them not functioning optimally and what seems to plague the majority of ward committees. The research also seeks to explore whether the dysfunctionality originates from operational issues such as lack of resources and capacity, the flawed composition of ward committees, conflicting relationships with ward councillors or processes within the municipality, especially the NMBM. This study aimed at assessing the development of ward committee structures as encapsulated within the legal and policy framework.
Marshall and Rossman (2011:219) state that as categories and themes are developed and coding is well under way, the researcher begins a process whereby he or she offers integrative interpretations of what was learned. According to Patton (2002:480), interpretation brings meaning and coherence to the themes, patterns and categories, developing linkages and a story line that makes sense and is engaging to read. Interpretation means attaching significance to what was found, making sense of the findings, offering explanations, drawing conclusions, extrapolating lessons, making inferences, considering meanings and otherwise imposing order. Part of this phase is concerned with evaluating the data for their usefulness and centrality. The researcher should select the most useful data segments to support the emerging story to illuminate the questions being explored and to decide how they are central to the story that is unfolding about the social phenomenon.

There are several models of report writing like various ways of balancing descriptions, analysis and interpretation. Description provides the skeleton frame for analysis that leads to interpretation (Patton, 2002:503).

Another issue is that of transformation where the combination or homogenising of data requires a theoretical interpretation which includes both data sets when only one (qualitative) is usually treated in this manner – the quantitative set being viewed more as fact reflecting reality in the proving of a hypothesis. The tendency is for low level conceptual interpretation to be undertaken (Grbish, 2007:203).

Neuman (2006:159) states that interpretation means to assign significance or coherent meaning. Qualitative research reports rarely include tables with numbers. The only visual presentations of data may be maps, photographs, or diagrams textual evidence showing how ideas are related. A researcher weaves the data into discussions of their significance. The data are in the form of words including quotes or descriptions of particular events. Any numerical information is supplementary to the textual evidence.

The first step in qualitative interpretation is to learn about its meaning for the people being studied. The people who created the social behaviour have personal reasons or motives for their actions. This is first-order interpretation. A researcher’s
discovery and reconstruction of this first-order interpretation is a second-order interpretation, because the researcher comes in from outside to discover what has occurred. A researcher who adopts a strict interpretive approach may stop at the second-order interpretation – that is, once he or she understands the significance of the action for the people being studied. Many qualitative researchers go further to generalize theory. They move to a broader level of interpretation, or third-order interpretation, whereby a researcher assigns general theoretical significance (Neuman, 2006:160).

Kvale (1996:46-51) states that starting with an often vague and intuitive understanding of the text as a whole, its different parts are interpreted and out of these interpretations the parts are again related to the totality. During the analysis of qualitative interviews, it is common to read an interview through first to get at a more or less general meaning. The interpretation goes beyond the immediately given and enriches the understanding by bringing forth new differentiations and interrelations in the text, extending its meanings. Lastly, correspondingly the immediately experienced meanings in the interview situations are expanded and refined through interpretation.

Data was gathered by means of semi-structured interviews with two (2) ward councillors and ward committee members in wards 10 and 11 and eighteen (18) ward committee members in the NMBM.

4.8.1 Responses on questions on ward committee meetings

According to Section 73 of The Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998) all ward committees are required to hold monthly meetings in order to ensure that all issues affecting the wards are addressed by the municipal directorates.

With reference to ward committee meetings the following comments were made:

In some instances the ward committee members consult with the community and other stakeholders on a quarterly basis.
It was also lamented that ward councillors need to have public meetings on a continuous basis which would not only make the ward councillor aware of issues facing people in the ward, but would also foster a relationship of trust with the communities.

According to the councillor of ward 10, the ward committee is not functioning since 11 September 2009 due to failed ward committee nominations and election processes. Prior to 2009, ward committees met monthly to identify problems in the community. The councillor indicated that he had attended almost all meetings and when he could not attend, it was because of other community engagements. If the councillor could not attend, the meeting was postponed.

It was reported that sometimes the committee was unable to constitute a quorum. Some members were frustrated because of lack of service delivery in their area and choose not to attend the ward committee meetings.

Most respondents stated that community meetings were seldom held in community halls and the turnout was very small and it was not effective. Some respondents treat slightlying the role of the ward councillor and claimed that he or she does not convene ward committee meetings neither engage with the community.

The interviewees remarked that they should have been reimbursed for out of pocket expenses as sometimes members could not attend meetings due to a lack of finances. They also commented that they were always available to the community especially if it was an emergency that arose then they would SMS or phone each other.

4.8.2 **Responses on the role of ward councillors in their respective wards were that they:**

- Would patrol in the evenings to check for broken street lights to be reported to the Electricity and Energy Directorate for repairs. Sometimes they would patrol during the day for illegal dumping sites, potholes and
broken or stolen drain covers for reporting to the relevant directorate in order to be addressed.

- Coordinate meetings providing direction and facilitating request to the municipality and residents, not only at local government level but also at provincial and national government level.

Ward committees inevitably have been introduced in the local sphere of government to promote community development, participation and accountability. On the basis of the responses, it can be deduced that ward councillors and ward committees are not as functional as they are expected in the NMBM. The core business does not get the attention it deserves, due to the political and bureaucratic infightings that abounds within the municipality.

4.8.3 Responses on the questions on orientation training of ward councillors

It was evident that the need for training and development as an immediate priority especially, training on the IDP, budget and on functions and powers of the three spheres of government be adhered to.

The need for more training on financial and project management, communication skills and conflict management was expressed. It was noted that there was a very limited capacity for service delivery. It was suggested that ward committees need to be properly capacitated and to be able to deal with the complex political issue of service delivery in the community, and to be able to relay to the community the serious capacity constraints the municipality faces.

During the research it came to the fore that ward councillors subsequently agreed that they have the necessary skills required to run their respective wards effectively. It was also said that ward committee members should also be trained on how to liaise with the community on service delivery, on the processes and systems of the municipality, on conflict management, communications skills and project and financial management. This underlines the need for the municipality to ensure that ward committee members do receive training on a regular basis or that a qualifying
criterion be developed in future that would ensure that all members do have basic education and skills.

4.8.4 Responses on the questions about community participation

According to Section 17(2) of the Municipal Systems Act, all “mechanisms, processes and procedures” for community participation, municipalities must take into account the special needs of people who cannot read or write, people with disabilities, women, and other disadvantaged groups.

In response to the question on effective community participation the following were clearly stated:

- In addition to the ward committee structure there are churches, schools and community policing forums, development committees, play schools and home-based care groups as other channels that can be utilised for community participation in the ward.
- It is important for him/her as the councillor to have a direct relationship with the community. Subsequently, there have never been any tensions between themselves and the ward committee in the past.
- Ward committee members do not receive enough support from the municipality. A particular point of contention is the stipend members receive, which the councillor believes should be the same as the payment to CDWs.
- The current model of community development that includes the participation of the community within the NMBM is not addressing the main objectives of capacitating and empowering people around the processes and challenges that the municipality is faced with.
- The ward committee has not been involved in the discussions pertaining to the IDP, the budget or bylaws.
- Ward councillors do not have the decision-making power on service delivery within the ward.
4.8.5 Responses on the question of areas that need to be developed in wards 10 and 11

The ward councillor pronounced that the residents would like to see that the ward committee must call for service delivery to be expedited. The respondents identified water and electricity as the most common needs expressed in wards 10 and 11. Road maintenance, houses, clinics, primary schools, street lights and sport fields were also mentioned. Both ward councillors complained that the ruling party was only concerned with the previously disadvantaged areas like Motherwell, Kwazakhele, New Brighton, Zwide and forgotten about the Northern Areas.

The interviewees mentioned that the request for assistance to the municipality for roads, water and electricity always fall on deaf ears in as much, that no response is forthcoming from the municipality and this brings about the perception that ward councillors is not doing their job well.

With regards to recreation facilities, there is only the Adcock Stadium and the Gelvandale playing fields and these facilities cannot occupy all sporting codes for the youth. It can only facilitate soccer, rugby and tennis. In ward 11, sports forums are held at the ward councillor’s office, with bodies that have good ideas but do not get the necessary support from the municipality. It was also mentioned that little effort is made by the municipality to upgrade the recreation facilities such as play grounds and the stadium in the Northern Areas although funds for the maintenance of these facilities is budgeted. What seems to be a problem in this regard is the management and utilisation of the budgeted money.

Concerns were raised that the community is losing confidence in the ward committee because the ward councillor and proportional representation (PR) councillor are not addressing their needs. Most of the expressed views by the previous ward committee members were that if the municipality could respond to the community then there should have been expedited service delivery. These members also felt that their role is to bring service delivery to the community and to link them to the councillor and the municipality through information dissemination. One of the
respondents said that promises were made that service delivery would be addressed but nothing has improved.

4.8.6 Responses on the questions of the role of ward committees in community development

The previous ward committee members communicated their role as the one's looking after the community to see to it that projects undertaken in the ward will benefit the specific community and they would also help the community in every which way they can.

The following remark was made that apart from the ward committee, ward councillors also draws on home-based care groups, churches, sporting clubs as structures through which he promotes community development and capacity building within the ward. It was said that the previous ward committee did well although they did not always report back to the community. Claims were made that the councillors normally reports on a monthly basis to the municipality concerning things within the ward.

It was also iterated by the ward councillor that the need for role players such as effective NGOs and community involvement will be realised should everyone involved works as a team, putting forward a united front to achieve goals and objectives effectively and efficiently.

Certain responses made was that ward committees should be accountable for their activities to the communities they represent, and not only to councillors or municipalities and there should even be clear lines of responsibility and accountability between ward councillors, ward committees and CDWs.

4.8.7 Responses on the questions on the role of ward committees

It was said that the ward councillors are chairpersons of the ward committees. Their role is to direct committee meetings and to liaise with the public as well as to take part in the council debates on municipal programmes and to give feedback to the
community. On the contrary it is expected that ward committee members should liaise with the community, bring issues to the ward committee meetings and take the concerns of the public to relevant departments in the municipality. It was noted that, it is sometimes difficult for ward committee members to fulfil the roles expected of them because ward 11 is large and travelling costs are high for members to attend meetings. Therefore, some of the constituencies do not get feedback. Ward committees need to learn more about their roles, the performance measures and the engagement with the budget process. The idea of a stipend being granted to ward committee members was well supported and it was also asserted that ward committees are the eyes and ears in their respective portfolios and needs to give feedback to the ward councillor.

It was stated that ward committees understand their roles, and they act in line with policy and legislation but they are blamed for the municipality’s inability to deliver services.

It was also iterated that ward committees should act as effective communication channels and that it required a strong system of representation and furthermore this role should be more effectively communicated to communities. From the interviews, one can express an opinion that councillors and officials in particular should be cautioned against seeing ward committees as the only structure that can be involved in the development of communities. For example, there are also NGOs, businesses, sporting bodies, police forums, educational institutions, just to name a few, that can play a role in community development.

4.8.8 Responses on the funds available for community development

What emerged during the study was that there should be a national fund to support ward committees and to provide for capacity building training, resources and stipends for ward committees. It was also pronounced that the municipality’s budget was insufficient to address all the needs in the ward and the councillor is being blamed for the non-delivery.
4.8.9 Responses on the communication between the municipality and ward committees

This study clearly indicated that the previous ward committee was not very involved in talks around the IDP, performance management and the budget.

Concern was expressed that most of the inputs made by ward councillors in respect of the IDP had not been included in the draft IDP documents. The ward based planning initiative had not materialised and the submissions made in the bilateral meetings as well as the mayoral outreach meetings had not been included in the IDP document.

Important points raised during the study were that there are not enough follow up from councillors with the municipality concerning the issues that were raised by the ward committees. Communities seldom receive feedback from the municipality about the concerns that were raised with ward committees.

Overall, the relationship of the community and the committee was in good standing even though the support is getting smaller because of non-delivery of services within the wards.

One of the concerns noted was that there was no direct ward committee representation in the affairs of the NMBM.

Ward committee members claim that they have had a good relationship with the ward councillors and that the councillor would go that extra mile to accommodate the needs in the ward. There is a good relationship amongst the committee and the general community, but the few community members who had ambitions to be become councillors in certain instances caused problems. They even visited schools to negotiate for the exemption of school fees for learners’ parents who were not in a position to pay the necessary fees.

On the basis of the responses, it is clear that ward councillors have a pivotal role in determining the effective and efficient running of wards.
Dissatisfaction was expressed about the influence of political parties in ward committees and it was indicated that:

- Some of the ward committee members volunteered their services with the purpose of promoting the agenda of their political parties or to improve their chances of becoming ward councillors too and it led to infighting between members and friction with ward councillors.
- Party politics did play a role in the election process, although this view was not shared by the members of the committee. They believed they were selected because they are active in their communities. Subsequently, they did accept some opposition party supporters onto the committee.
- Some opposition party members wanted to be on the ward committee to make things difficult for him as the councillor.
- There are some tensions within the wards. There are also political ambitions of people to become ward councillors and/or committee members, especially those that belong to the ruling party. This makes it difficult for the councillor who is sometimes accused for things that are not true.
- The democratic dispensation brought hope but it also gave people a vote, which resulted in that they realised that they are being marginalised. They became unhappy with the current situation of the ruling party that does not give heed to their plight and issues raised with the municipality.
- Politics has a hampering effect in that they rather focus on the underpinning politics. It is also believed that the focus should instead be placed on achieving results and service delivery.

The NMBM needs to put in place mechanisms that would ensure the effective and efficient functioning of ward committees.
4.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter started off with the methodology that was used and also provided the context and data collected from ward councillors and ward committee members from wards 10 and 11 of the NMBM. The data was presented and interpreted according to themes to achieve the objectives of this study.

Chapter Five will provide conclusions and recommendations.
CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Although there is a political move to engage the community on a continuous basis concerning issues affecting them, there needs to be a commitment from both politicians and municipal officials to ensure that public participation processes are carried out effectively and efficiently in order to enhance community development through the ward committee structures in the Northern Areas of the NMBM.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide recommendations arising from the issues raised in Chapter Four. These recommendations are on the improved role of the ward councillors, the training of ward committees, the payment of ward committee members, the role of ward committees in community development, community participation in community development, and the relations between ward committees and ward councillors.

5.2 CONCLUSION

This study has attempted to investigate the need to enhance community development through the ward committee structures in the NMBM.

The NMBM, therefore, should move critically towards genuine capacity building for community development and developmental local government. It is therefore advocated that the efficiency principle be advanced within a people-centred paradigm, in order for local structures to handle and to realise the general objectives of community development.

Chapter One provides the general introduction to the study. It consists of an introduction, a problem statement, a hypothesis, the research methodology and design, as well as the data collection procedure, and the subsequent analysis of the data.
In Chapter Two, an overview of the concepts and the theory of community development were presented here.

Chapter Three examined the role of the ward councillors and the ward committee structures in community development.

Chapter Four focused on the research methodology of the study. The data collection instruments, the data collection procedural analysis and the interpretation of the data are here given.

Chapter Five, which is the current chapter, deals with the research findings and the recommendations.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

In the following sections, the recommendations for improving community development, through the ward committee structures – and how they can contribute to local participatory government – will be discussed.

5.3.1 Recommendations for improved roles of ward councillors in the functioning of ward committees

The councillor plays a critical role in the effective functioning of the ward committees. The councillor’s responsibility does not end by convening and chairing ward committee meetings, but s/he is also responsible for channelling any inputs from the ward committees through to the council.

Central to the needs that must be highlighted by the Constituency Services Directorate, in order to ensure that the matters raised by the community are addressed as a matter of urgency, mechanisms need to be put in place to ensure that the directorates do, in fact, attend to the issues raised by the community through the offices of the ward councillors.

Therefore it becomes critical that there should be:
• Institutionalised mechanisms to enable ordinary ward councillors to raise issues to the municipality.

• Ward councillors should have the necessary skills, motivation and enthusiasm to make the committee work effectively.

• A skills audit of ward committees needs to be conducted, although there is as yet no annual skills plan for members in place. This exercise would assist the municipality to identify the core competencies, as well as the skills that are available, and those that are needed.

• The effectiveness of ward committees lies in the levels of education, the expertise and the skills of the members. The ward committees need to learn more about their roles: as to how to measure the performance of the municipality, and how to engage with the budget process.

5.3.2 Recommendations on the training of ward committees on human relations

The municipality has to ensure that ward committee members do, in actual fact, receive training on a regular basis – or that a qualifying criterion be developed in future that would ensure that all members do have basic education and skills. The first priority that a municipality should consider is the need for training and the development of ward committees on the IDP and municipal budget and budgeting process. Ward committees also need to be trained and oriented on the functions and powers of the municipality, financial and project management, communication skills and conflict management.

The municipality should also capacitate ward committees in all the complex political and administrative issues of service delivery in the community.

Ward committee members should also be trained on how to liaise with the community on service delivery issues.
5.3.3 Recommendations based especially on the stipend and the community development workers

Ward committee members and CDWs should receive a stipend for their services to the wards. This would serve as an incentive to motivate them to work more efficiently. It would also cover the travelling costs of members when attending meetings and other issues of the ward.

CDWs should work closely with the ward committee members, in order to respond to community requests for support. Ideally, they should have an office from which to work with equipment, such as computers, telephones and stationery.

5.3.4 Recommendations based on ward committees in community development

The role of ward committees is to advise councillors and to act as the link between the community and the municipality. The functioning of ward committees is mixed; and there is much room for improvement. Ward committees should look after the community to see to it that the projects implemented in the ward would benefit the specific community; and also help the community – in every way they are able to do so.

Ward committees should be accountable for their activities to the communities they represent: and not only to councillors or municipalities; and there should even be clear lines of responsibility and accountability between the ward councillors, the ward committees and the CDWs.

Ward committees should not be subjected to the control or manipulation of ward councillors.

Policy or legal measures might be a possible option to discourage the unnecessary politicisation of ward committees.
Ward committees should play a role in performance management during the planning, review and monitoring stages; and they should provide mechanisms for communication between the municipalities and the ward committees.

For ward committees to function effectively and efficiently, they need to be actively involved in the policy-making process of the NMBM. Subsequently, communities would develop a sense of purpose whenever they make a contribution to civic affairs.

Ward committees should be democratically elected, because representative structures that represent certain interests can never be truly representative of everyone.

Ward councillors should hold public meetings with their constituencies four weeks before the council process commences. This could eventually lead to meaningful inputs from the communities.

5.3.5 Recommendations on improved community participation in community development

It is important to recognise that different communities have different needs when it comes to development and participation. It may be deduced that poor communities need more intense forms of support and engagement, as part of the process of generating economic, social and service development, and parallel to that, wealthier, better-resourced communities need a different, less intense, mode of engagement, like capacity building and deep interaction between ward committees and the community.

Vacant pockets of land should be used to build high density units – to alleviate the housing shortage in the area. Approximately 800 units could be built, which could accommodate substantially large numbers of backyard dwellers.

Ward committees should be a key conduit for back-and-forth communication between communities and municipalities on community development strategies that could lead to greater service delivery in the local sphere of government.
The municipality should have communication strategies to support ward committees, whilst putting as much information as possible about the functioning of the municipality and programmes and projects at the disposal of ward committees. The municipality should, therefore, have the responsibility of communicating to citizens what ward committees are and what they exist to do.

It has emerged that in the NMBM, community development through the ward committee structures is a crucial element in building democracy. The success of a democracy depends on the effectiveness of community development; thus, the key to democracy is community development. Community development demands a constant consultation with political representatives, the bureaucracy and those communities that are affected.

To promote community participation in the decision-making processes related to community development, ward committees should receive regular training in local government matters, such as local economic development, integrated development plan (IDP) and the small, medium and micro enterprise (SMME) that are important, if not the most important, mechanisms through which the NMBM can meet its developmental responsibilities. Such training would provide ward committees with vital information on what the local community could gain from municipality initiatives, and how committees would influence these policies.

5.3.6 Recommendations on the relationship between ward councillors and ward committees

The relationship of ward councillors and ward committees should be of such nature that they work together to ensure that there is an annual plan of activities. Both of these stakeholders should handle queries and complaints concerning the ward. There should be a bond between the councillor and the ward committee, in order to see that there is increased participation of the local residents in municipal decision-making. It is imperative that councillors and ward committees must be actively involved in the IDP process, annual budget performance management and projects that impact on the community. Councillors and ward committees must be involved in dispute resolutions and municipal operations.
It is thus evident that increased community participation is an essential component in community development in a democratic society.
LIST OF REFERENCES


ANNEXURE 1

LETTER OF CONSENT FROM MUNICIPALITY (NMBM)

nelson mandela bay
MUNICIPALITY
PORT ELIZABETH • Uitenhage • Despatch

CONSTITUENCY SERVICES

tel: +27(41) 505 4562 fax: +27(41) 505 4520
PO Box 116, Port Elizabeth 6000
Republic of South Africa
e-mail: mdaco@mandelametro.gov.za

26 August 2011

To: Walter Ah Shane

CONSENT LETTER TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE WARD COMMITTEE STRUCTURES IN THE NORTHERN AREAS OF THE NELSON MANDELA METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

The Constituency Co-ordinator’s office is in the process of establishing the Ward Committees of the Constituency for Council establishment by October 2011.

The office is encouraged with your task of conducting a research on a very important structure that encourages community participation in the work of Council.

It is with great pleasure to confirm that you can conduct your research at the specified Wards (Ward 10 & 11).

It will be highly appreciated if you can share your work with us after completion of your task.

Kind regards,

[Signature]

DUMISANI MBEBE
DIRECTOR, CONSTITUENCY CO-ORDINATOR
WARD COUNCILLOR INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR COUNCILLORS

1. In your opinion what is the role of the ward committee within the local sphere of government?

___________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

2. Which area in your ward needs to be developed?

___________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

3. As councillor how do you identify and prioritise the needs of the community within your area?

___________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

4. As a ward councillor, how do you get to know the problems of your constituency?

___________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

5. Ward councillors play an extreme important role in promoting democracy. How do you fulfil your role in this regard?

___________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

6. Are there any challenges encountered in terms of community participation?

___________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

93
7. How do you think the ward committee structures can overcome the challenges?
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

8. In your opinion are the Northern Areas ward committee succeeding in meeting the developmental duties?
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

9. In your view, does the municipality make adequate funding available for community development?
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

10. As the communication link between council and the community how do you monitor the performance of the municipality?
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
ANNEXURE 3

WARD COMMUNITY INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR MEMBERS OF THE WARD COMMITTEES

1. In your view does the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality allow for community development through the ward structures?

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

2. Does the municipality respond positively to the concerns raised by the community during public meetings?

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

3. If no, does the community follow-up on these and how this is done?

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

4. Is the feedback that the officials and politicians give during public meetings adequate in the specific ward?

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

5. If yes, who gives feedback to the community and how?

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

6. In your opinion can public participation lead to better or improved service delivery?

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
7. How often are public meetings organised?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

8. In your view, do you think that these meetings are effective?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

9. Must newly elected councillors undergo orientation training?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

10. Is your councillor available and accessible at all times when they are needed?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

11. In cases where the councillor is not available, how does the community solve its issues?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

12. What do you think may cause the councillor not to be available?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

13. Are there adequate funding available for community development and effective community participation within the ward structures?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
14. In your opinion, do you think the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality involves the ward committee members when making decisions in community development issues?
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________

15. If no, how do you think the municipality should involve members of the ward committee?
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________

Name and Surname of Participant
_______________________________________________________________________________

Signature : _______________________________________________________________________

Date: ___________________________ Ward: _______________________________
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

We hereby certify that we have language-edited the Master’s dissertation prepared by Mr Walter T. Ah Shene, entitled: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE COMMITTEE STRUCTURES IN THE NORTHERN AREAS OF THE NELSON MANDELA BAY MUNICIPALITY, and that we are satisfied that, provided the changes we have made are effected to the text, the language is of an acceptable standard, and is fit for publication.

Kate Goldstone
BA (Rhodes)
SATI No: 1000168
UPE Language Practitioner (1975-2004)
NMMU Language Practitioner (2005)

Patrick Goldstone
BSc (Stell)
DEd (UPE)