
S.E. Memela

2012

S.E. Memela

2012

Submitted in fulfilment/partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Masters
at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
December 2012
Acknowledgements

I wish to thank my family for the support they gave me during this period of study. The long hours I spent in the study room, at the office, and away from home, deprived you of a husband, father, and a friend.

To my employer, Idasa, especially, Messrs Paul Graham and Ivor Jenkins, I thank you for the financial support the organisation offered for the completion of this project.

To the respondents, and the administrative and political leadership of Hibiscus Coast Municipality, I hope this will assist in deepening your understanding of your achievements and the challenges that still lie ahead.

My sincerest gratitudes go to my Supervisors, Prof P. Gary, and Dr Joleen Steyn Kotze. This was unachievable, had it not been for your firmness and professional guidance. The faculty could not have appointed better supervisors than you.

I dedicate this to my parents, Bongukufa Memela and Kholiwe Memela. MaGambu Amahle, this was worth the wait, and the sacrifices you made. The day I left home for the first time to University in February 1984 is still fresh as yesterday in my memory.
## Chapter Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter One</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1. Aim</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2. Motivation of the Study</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3. Research Question</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4. Background to Hibiscus Coast Municipality</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Two</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1. Concepts</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2. Legal and Policy Framework in South African Municipalities</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3. Procedural Justice</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5. Forms of Public participation</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6. Types of Public Participation</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7. State Institutions: Invited Spaces</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8. Conditions for effective public participation</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Three</th>
<th>28</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1. Research Techniques</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2. Justification for the method</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3. Where and who was involved in the study?</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4. Sample Profile</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Four</th>
<th>33</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DATA PRESENTATION</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1. Responses from respondents</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2. Analysis of the establishment of Ward participatory system in Hibiscus Coast Municipality</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Strengthening the new Ward Committees</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4. Enhancing community participation.</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5. Analysis of Challenges of Ward Committees participation in the Hibiscus Coast Municipality</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6. Target and focus of participation</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 5.</th>
<th>58</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FINDINGS</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

There is an on-going debate in South Africa whether municipalities are an effective vehicle for deepening participatory democracy or not. Due to serious backlogs on services, the role of municipalities has largely been reduced to service delivery, to the detriment and total neglect of fundamental functions of local government. These are (Act 200, 1996)

(a) To provide democratic and accountable government for local communities;
(b) To ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner;
(c) To promote social and economic development;
(d) To promote a safe and healthy environment; and
(e) To encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government.

On the other hand Haveri, Stenvall & Majoinen (2011) argue that if the municipalities are a government sphere closest to the people, they are therefore best placed to, and should, lead and support the deepening of participatory democracy, what they call self-government. As the debate rages on, there are indications that most of the challenges that face the municipalities are related to the distance that has been developing between municipal institutions and the citizens.

1.2. Motivation of the Study

This study was aimed at deepening our understanding of the extent, causes and effects of lack of acceptable levels of public participation in local government institutions, systems and processes. It looked at public participation beyond the statutory structures such as ward committees and
Integrated Development Plan (IDP) Representative Forums. It considered other spaces for public discourse and influence on public policy at local level.

When South Africa moved from an oppressive regime in 1994, the government initially faced a problem of over-legitimization. That is, because the new government had been democratically elected, ordinary citizens expected that it was going to do everything it was elected for. Indeed the Constitution and the local government legislation in general, and the System Act in particular, prescribed that citizens should participate in municipal affairs. In other words, municipalities were to be responsive, transparent and accountable.

However, later developments proved the expectation to be wrong, and there was a shift from high expectations to disappointment.

Overtime, the level of participation by citizens has been declining. The studies conducted by the then Department of Provincial and Local Government, idasa, Municipal IQ, and other research bodies revealed that the level of community participation has been on a constant decline, and at times is regarded as the cause of the emergence of violent service delivery protests.

The Afrobarometer study conducted the Citizens Surveys (2008) and found the following:

**Question:** How well or badly do you think your local council is practicing the following procedures? Or haven’t you heard enough to have an opinion?

Allowing citizens like you to participate in the council’s decisions.

- Very Badly 30%
- Fairly Badly 34%
- Fairly well 20%
Very well    7%
Don’t know 9%

This study is aimed at finding the causes, effect and patterns of lack of public participation in local municipalities.

1.3. Research Question
How has public participation taken place in Hibiscus Coast municipality between 2008 and 2011?

1.4. Background to Hibiscus Coast Municipality
(www.hcm.gov.za/doc_downloads)

The Hibiscus Coast is situated in the KwaZulu Natal South Coast. To the south, it borders the Eastern Cape across the Umtamvuna River, which is significant in terms of the positive spin-offs from the Wild Coast Spatial Development Initiative.

Key objectives of Spatial Development Initiative, as a development strategy, as stated in the Province of the Eastern Cape Growth and Development Strategy are to:
- To generate sustainable economic growth and development in the Wild Coast area
- To generate long-term and sustainable employment for local inhabitants
- To maximize the mobilization of private investment, especially in the context of community tourism development and to lessen demands on government funds for development projects
- To exploit spin-off opportunities from tourism investments for the development of SMME’s and for the development of local communities
- To exploit the under-utilised location and economic advantages of SDI areas for export oriented growth.
(www.sarpn.org/documents/d0000875/docs)

The Hibiscus Coast Municipality also neighbours, and is the only source of employment for the residents of the rural municipalities of Umzumbe and Ezinqoleni to the north and west respectively.

The coastal component of the municipality consists of a string of coastal towns ranging from large, well established urban and tourism centres to small resort towns. From the north, the approximately 75km of coastline contains the coastal towns of Hibberdene, Southport,
Umtentweni, Port Shepstone, Oslo Beach, Shelly Beach, Uvongo, Margate, Ramsgate, Southbroom, Marina Beach, San Lameer, Trafalgar, Palm Beach, Munster and finally Port Edward.

The rural component includes substantial tracts of productive commercial farmland and the Tribal Authority areas of Lushaba, Madlala, Mavundla, Ndwalane, Nzimakwe and Xolo.

Hibiscus Coast Municipality is one of the six local municipalities under the Ugu district municipality in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

It is a subtropical region of lush and well-watered scenic valleys and blue flag beaches with its gigantic rivers running into its all the year-round warm Indian Ocean. Hibiscus Coast Municipality is the economic hub if the district and has the highest population numbers compared to the other local municipalities within the Ugu District Municipality.

The municipality is strategically located between Durban and the Eastern Cape Province and has well established infrastructure along the urban strip.

**Composition**

Hibiscus Coast Municipality (KZN216) is a B category municipality in the Ugu District (DC21) in the Province of KwaZulu Natal. The municipal area is approximately 837 square kilometres. The municipality consists of five previous traditional local authorities (TLCs) and six traditional authority areas. Towns are located along the urban strip and the traditional areas are located in the hinterland or the south western side of the municipality.

The Hibiscus Coast Municipality’s coastline runs from Hibberdene to Port Edward. The municipality’s geographic location is 30° 22 seconds and 30 minutes East and 30° 45 seconds 0 minutes South.

The municipality’s population is projected at 292 891. Traditional Local Councils:

- Port Shepstone
- Umtamvuna / Port Edward
- Margate
- Hibberdene
- Impenjati / Southbroom
HCM comprises of the following traditional areas:

• KwaXolo
• KwaNzimakwe
• KwaNdwalane
• KwaMadlala
• KwaMavundla and
• KwaLushaba

VISION

To be a thriving, well managed, tourist friendly, national leader providing all its inhabitants with quality services in a safe and healthy environment.

MISSION

Hibiscus Coast Municipality excels at providing quality services for all, facilitating partnerships and creating an enabling environment for sustainable development
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review of the study is aimed at investigating and exploring the research question set out in the introductory chapter:

*How has public participation taken place in Hibiscus Coast municipality between 2008 and 2011?*

This chapter provides a foundation for subsequent chapters treated in this research report. Analysis of the core concepts of the research problem is done in such a way that the measurable parts become obvious. Concepts discussed in this chapter are not the only concepts that exist. The boundary of knowledge regarding public participation is constantly changing as new scientific and theoretical knowledge are being added to the existing one. This makes the field more challenging and interesting to study than it would have been if the same concepts were studied all the time.

This chapter starts by clarifying the meaning of concepts used in this report. Then explanation follows regarding some of the forms of public participation, levels of public participation, some of the obstacles to public participation practice and legislation on public participation with specific reference to South African structures and systems of governance at local level.

**2.1. Concepts**

For the purpose of this report, specific concepts such as

- public participation,
- citizen participation,
- invited spaces,
- decentralization,
- democracy and the vote,
- local governance,
- good governance,
- community development,
- public policy and policy implementation,
- procedural justice, are important.

As a result, each phenomenon is explored and its relevance indicated within the context of public participation. The major goal is to identify the golden thread running through these concepts where public participation revolves.

2.1.1. Public participation

Public participation is a political principle or practice, and may also be recognised as a right (right to public participation). The terms public participation may be used interchangeably with the concept or practice of stakeholder engagement and/or popular participation. Generally public participation seeks and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision. The principle of public participation holds that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process. Public participation implies that the public’s contribution will influence the decision. Public participation may be regarded as a way of empowerment and as vital part of democratic governance.

Public participation as a concept has been defined differently by various authors. Pring and Noe (2002) define public participation as an all-encompassing label used to describe various mechanisms that individuals or groups may use to communicate their views on a public issue. They argue that public participation is used to build and facilitate capacity and self-reliance among the people. Therefore, public participation is an involvement of the citizens in initiatives that affect their lives.

White (1992) defines public participation as an active involvement of the local population in decision-making concerning development projects or their implementation. In development planning and implementation, people as citizens and consumers of the services are the most valuable resource,
since they know and understand their needs and how such needs can be met. This definition is supported by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) which further highlights that in public participation, people themselves are afforded an opportunity to improve their conditions of living, with as much reliance as possible on their own initiative.

In South Africa, public participation is defined as an open and accountable process through which individuals and groups within selected communities can exchange views and influence decision-making. This definition is in line with one of the Constitutional principles of the Republic which states that people’s needs must be responded to and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy making.

The common theme amongst these various definitions of public participation places citizens at the centre stage and the emphasis is on the active participation in their own development-related matters to ensure sustainable livelihoods.

According to Raga & Taylor (2005), there is a responsibility on municipalities to develop the capacity of local communities to understand and participate in the governing process as a partner. The legal definition of a municipality is that it comprises not only of the councillors and bureaucracy, but also the community as well. A defining feature of the new system is the opportunity it offers ordinary people to become actively involved in the governing process.

Public Participation takes different forms. Governmental agencies and private companies that initiate and organize public participation are experimenting with innovative methods. These ‘social experiments’ include citizen town hall meetings, Internet conferencing, advisory boards, workplace councils, scenario and strategic planning workshops, informal roundtables, living room meetings, deliberative opinion polls, and visioning
conferences, public meetings, to name a few. But no matter what they are called, these processes involve bringing people together so they can talk about a specific issue, become informed about it, and arrive at a strategy for what to do.

2.1.2. Democracy and the vote

The belief in direct democracy is based on the right of every citizen over a certain age to attend political meetings, vote on the issue being discussed at that meeting and accepting the majority decision should such a vote lead to a law being passed which you as an individual did not support. Part of this belief, is the right of every one to hold political office if they choose to do so. Direct democracy also believes that all people who have the right should actively participate in the system so that it is representative of the people and that any law passed does have the support of the majority.

Direct democracy gives all people the right to participate regardless of religious beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, physical well-being etc. Only those who have specifically gone against society are excluded from direct democracy. Unlike in South Africa, where prisoners have a right to vote, in Britain, those in prison have offended society in some way and, therefore, their democratic rights are suspended for the duration of their time in prison. Once released, and having ‘learnt a lesson’, their democratic rights are once again restored. (Robertson, 1986)

Direct democracy is fine in theory but it does not always match the theory when put into practice. Direct democracy requires full participation from those allowed to. But how many people have the time to commit themselves to attending meetings especially when they are held mid-week during an afternoon? How many wish to attend such meetings after a day’ work etc.?

2.1.3. Public Participation and Citizen Participation
Public participation has to do with a two-way exchange of information between the public and their local authority. Public participation could be political participation in public affairs, which is the participation of the public in the policy management cycle through the elected member in the local government council. Public participation could also be executive participation by the public through interest groups in the implementation of policies by local authorities (Hanekom 1987:33--34). Public participation is thus the act of taking part in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of policies by interest groups through formal institutions. Examples of interest groups include associations such as trade unions, pressure groups, professional institutes, staff associations, chambers of commerce and churches. Interest groups have the potential to supply public managers with much information about the nature and possible consequences of policy proposals (Anderson 1990:60).

Citizen participation, on the other hand, is the direct participation of ordinary citizens in public affairs. In the policy management cycle the individual citizen is often neglected in favour of interest groups and more prominent participants. This is unfortunate, because the individual often does seem to make a difference. Citizen participation may be defined as purposeful activities in which people participate in relation to a local authority area of which they are legal residents. Brynard (2009:1)

Citizen participation, however, is, distinct from political participation, because citizen participation lays emphasis on the person rather than the state in the participatory relationship. Public participation is not synonymous with citizen participation mainly because public participation is a wider concept which may include citizen participation. The reason is that the word `public' in public participation refers to all the people whether or not they possess the rights and obligations of citizenship (Langton 1978:20)
In exploring whether ward committees are in fact the non-partisan structures for community participation in local government stipulated by legislation and official policy, Piper and Deacon (2008) found from the municipality of Msunduzi suggest that, where they actually function, ward committees are dominated by local political leaders. They concluded that “in most IFP wards and some ANC wards, ward committees are simply extensions of the local party branch, and reflect the pathologies associated with the ‘dominant party syndrome’. In other wards there is both more party pluralism and less direct party control, but often intra-party factionalism or local political rivalries dominate the composition and operation of ward committees. In short, ward committees allow for little community voice alternative to dominant ward political leadership”.

Attempts to strike a balance between participative and representative democracies are always accompanied by a myriad of difficult questions. If South Africa has 50 million people who can involve themselves in politics if they wish, how could such a number be accommodated at meetings etc.? Who would be committed to being part of this system day-in and day-out when such commitment would be all but impossible to fulfil? How many people have the time to find out about the issues being discussed whether at a local or a national level? How many people understand these issues and the complexities that surround them? If people are to be informed on such issues, who does this informing? How can you guarantee that such information is not biased?

Participation of citizens is at the very heart of the idea of democracy, and citizens committed to democratic values, mindful of their civic duties and who become involved in political activity are the lifeblood of any democratic system. Democracy in all its forms – representative, participatory or direct – including the mixed ones has to be strengthened and good governance, including the fight against corruption, accountability and efficiency of all institutions as well as transparency be enhanced.
The representative-plus-participatory type of democracy holding a medium-ranking position seems to be an adequate answer to the democratic malaise. Participatory democracy complements and strengthens representative democracy: decision-making remains first and foremost legitimised by the legislator, i.e. the elected MPs or councillors. It is an indispensable complement of representative democracy.

Other concepts used in this report are:

- invited spaces - a label that serves to convey the origin of many intermediary institutions as government-provided, whether in response to popular demand, international community pressure or shifts in policy (Cornwall, 2004)
- decentralisation - Decentralisation of authority means conscious/systematic effort to bring dispersal (spreading) of decision making power to the lower levels of the Organisation. In decentralisation, only broad powers will be reserved at the top level. Such powers include power to plan, organise, direct and control and maximum powers will delegated to the authority at the lower level.
- Community development – empowerment of individuals and groups of people by providing them with the skills they need to effect change in their own communities. These skills are often created through the formation of large social groups working for a common agenda.

2.2. Legal and Policy Framework in South African Municipalities

The principle of community or citizen in South Africa is not taking place in a vacuum. All relevant policies and associated legislation place participation and accountability at the very heart of the system of local government.

The legislative framework on public participation is comprised of at least five main documents:

- The constitution of South Africa,
- the White Paper on Local government,
- the Municipal Structures Act,
- the Municipal Systems Act,

All these legislation describe the way in which local government should function and provide the framework for how municipalities interact with communities. The following is the brief summary of the provisions in the local government legislation relating to community participation.


The Constitution of South Africa enacted in 1996 is the supreme law and as such lays foundation of the democratic political system of the country. It envisages a complete transformation of local government system in which local government is given a distinctive status and role in building democracy and promotion socioeconomic development. Such a process is notably meant to bring government closer to the people and thus reinforce two of the fundamental mechanism of sustainable democracy, which is participation of the people and accountability of the local government.

Chapter 7 (Section 152) of the Constitution state that the objects of local government are, “To provide democratic and accountable government for local communities” and to “encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government”. It is the duty of municipalities to ensure effective participation of the citizens and communities in the matters of local government.


The White Paper on Local Government issued in 1998 gives effect to the new vision of the local government entrenched in the Constitution. The second section of the White Paper, “Developmental Local Government” 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. To realise this vision, municipalities are
encouraged to build local democracy by developing strategies and mechanisms to continually engage with citizens, business and community based organisations.

The White Paper provides some municipalities with the possibility to develop structures that would ensure meaningful participation and interaction with the councillors. It further gives a general outlines on the system of ward committees, their function, composition and role, the vision of ward committees as a channel of communication, powers, and duties of ward committees and also the administrative arrangements. These general outlines expresses the vision of ward committees which is the main role of ward committees, which is the facilitation of local community participation in the decisions which affect the local community, the articulation of local community interests and the representation of these interests within the municipality.

2.2.3. Municipal Structures Act, 1998

The Chapter 2 Section 19 of the Municipal Structures Act requires a municipality to strive with its capacity, to achieve the objectives set out in section 152 of the constitution, namely to develop mechanisms to consult with community and community organisations in performance of its functions and exercising its powers. Also reviewing annually the needs of the community and municipal priorities and strategies for meeting those needs and involving the community in municipal processes.

Chapter 4 (part 4) of the Act requires that the municipality must establish ward committees, with the objective of enhancing participatory democracy in the local government. It obliges the municipality to make rules regulating the procedure to elect members of the ward committees. The chapter also provides that the ward councillor shall be the chairperson of the ward committee. It further provide a framework for the powers and functions of the ward committees, their term of office, how to deal with vacancies, remuneration, and dissolution of the ward committees.
The Act makes a provision for the establishment of ward committees as a possible way of encouraging community participation in matters of the municipality.

2.2.4. Municipal Systems Act, 2000
The Municipal Systems Act provides the core principles, mechanisms and processes that are necessary for the municipalities to fulfil their objectives. Chapter 4, section 17(2) states that “a municipality must establish appropriate mechanism, processes and procedures to enable the local community to participate in the affairs of the Municipality” It further calls for municipalities to develop a culture of municipal governance that works hand in hand with elected representatives with a system of participatory governance.

Section 5 places more emphasise on the rights and duties of the citizens in relation to municipal functions, which include contributing to the decision making processes of the municipality, being informed on all decisions of the council affecting the rights, property and reasonable expectations. The other important component of this Act in Chapter 3 is the creation of conditions that will allow for the lowest members of the community to participate, such as disable people, disadvantaged groups and also people who cannot read and write. Section 33 states that municipalities must determine methods to consult communities and residents on their needs and priorities. They must also determine methods to provide for their participation in the drafting process and the review of the integrated development plan.

2.2.5. Municipal Planning and Performance Regulations, 2001
There is a close connection between the municipal Planning and Performance management Regulations and Municipal Systems Act. The Act requires that a municipality through appropriate mechanisms, procedures and process established in terms of Chapter 4, must involve the local community in the development, implementation and review of the
municipalities’ performance management systems, and in particular, allow the community to participate in the setting of appropriate key performance indicators and performance targets. Section 15 of the municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations further says that if there are no other municipal wide structures for community participation, a municipality must establish a forum. The forum must be representative and enhance community participation in the integrated development plan. In addition, the forum must enhance public participation in monitoring, measuring and reviewing performance.

2.3. Procedural Justice

Amongst various streams of conceptual thoughts or theories of public participation is that of procedural justice. Webler and Tuler (2002) say that procedural justice is about fairness in public participation. Procedural justice is considered an important element in people’s satisfaction with decisions, perceptions of fairness, and support for authorities. A variety of criteria for procedural justice have been proposed, including the use of accurate information, representativeness, participation in decision making, and the suppression of bias.

Whilst effective or authentic participation, as King, Feltey and Susel (1998) prefer to refer to, is difficult to achieve, there are clear identifiable ingredients that can be attended to. These are administrative structures and processes, the administrators, and the citizens. Authenticity cannot be achieved by addressing problems in only one area. For example, citizen empowerment in the absence of administrative transformation is problematic. To develop processes that increase participation without changing the power relations between citizens and administrators is also problematic. Models of authentic participation must take a three-pronged approach, addressing all three components, seeking to (1) empower and educate community members, (2) re-educate administrators, and (3) enable administrative structures and processes.
2.4. Benefits of Public participation

Public participation in government decisions is important for many reasons and can strive to achieve a variety of goals. Arnstein (as cited in Laurian and Shaw, 2009) says that participation is a significant element of direct democracy as it promotes transparent, inclusive, and fair decision-making processes that entail some degree of power sharing between government agencies and members of the public. It can increase the responsiveness of government institutions to citizens’ values and interests. It can support the identification of acceptable decisions and enhance the quality of decisions and their legitimacy as well as the legitimacy of government institutions. At the individual level, participation can promote self-development, citizenship, and commitment to the public good. Participation can increase citizens’ trust in public institutions, although it also can engender distrust when participants feel ignored, disrespected, or manipulated. Finally, participation can raise public awareness of local issues and increase social inclusiveness and social capital.

2.5. Forms of Public participation

Ebler and Tuler (2002:179) note that simply providing opportunities to comment at public hearings, vote in referenda, or participate as members of an interest group or a social movement satisfies people’s needs to participate. In other instances, more elaborate forms of involvement are necessary. They identified two distinct levels of this “enhanced public participation.” At the first level is an opportunity for sustained deliberation among all parties involved. At the second level is a condition of power sharing in the decision making. Few applications of public participation include power sharing, but it is becoming more and more common for public involvement to include sustained deliberation. They conclude that how to realize either form of public participation is a matter of much debate.
In public governance, public participation involves creation, utilization and control of what Cornwall (2004:1) refers to as ‘spaces for participation’. Cornwall (2004) argues that a concept of space, rich with metaphor, is a literal descriptor of arenas where people gather, which are bounded in time as well as dimension. A space can be emptied or filled, permeable or sealed; it can be an opening, an invitation to speak or act. Spaces can also be clamped shut, voided of meaning, or depopulated as people turn their attention elsewhere. Thinking about participation as a spatial practice highlights the relations of power and constructions of citizenship that permeate any site for public engagement.

2.6. Types of Public Participation

Literature shows that there are different types of public participation. These range, amongst others, from voting in elections, participating in party politics, holding public demonstrations, petitioning local or national leaders, lobbying decision-makers, making written or verbal submissions to committees, and the use of ward committees at local government level.

Arnstein and Pretty as quoted by Davids, et al, developed six typologies to demonstrate the different concepts of public participation. These include:

- **Passive participation.** People participate by being told what is going to happen or what has already happened. In this context, participation relates to a unilateral top-down announcement by the authority or project manager.
- **Participation in information giving.** People participate by answering questions posed in questionnaires or telephone interviews or similar public participation strategies.
- **Participation by consultation.** People participate by being consulted while professionals, consultants and planners listen to their views. The professionals define both problems and solutions, and may modify these in the light of the people’s responses.
• Participation for material incentives. People participate by providing resources, such as labour, in return for food and cash.
• Interactive participation. People participate in a joint situational analysis, the development of action plans and capacity building. In this context, participation is seen as a right, not just as a means to achieve project goals.
• Self-mobilisation. People participate by taking initiatives independent of external institutions to change systems.

From the above, it is evident that public participation is multifaceted and takes place in various forms. In South Africa, most of the above types of public participation are applied. They all create a platform where citizens’ views find their way in development planning and policy making processes.

However, when citizens participate in information giving, they are often not informed of how the information will be used and they rarely receive the end products of such participatory process. In the South African context, according to the findings of the Public Service Commission’s study on the Evaluation of the Implementation of the Batho Pele Principle of Consultation, participation in information giving was the most popular type of public participation applied by departments. However, this approach is not in line with the Batho Pele White Paper which states that citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of public services they receive and, wherever possible, should be given a choice about the services that are offered.

2.7. State Institutions: Invited Spaces

Cornwall (2004) describes the types of participation spaces, notably the invited and the popular spaces. Invited spaces is a label that serves to convey the origin of many intermediary institutions as government-provided, whether in response to popular demand, international community pressure or shifts in policy. Some are more transient in character: policy moments where public space is opened up for deliberation or communication, before being closed again as
authorities return to business as usual. This is more evident in the notion of South African public hearings conducted either by a government institution or a committee of the legislature.

Other “invited spaces” are more durable, often taking the shape of regularised institutions modelled on enduring forums such as the ward committees, Integrated Development Forums, housing/crisis committees. In South Africa’s local government system, there is over reliance on ward committees, as invited spaces for issues identification, creation of solutions and review of progress.

Cornwall (2004) also questions the effectiveness of invited spaces. He notes that as with other “participatory” institutions, the preconditions for equitable participation and voice are often lacking within them. How to involve those who lack presence or voice in conventional political arenas, the resources to engage, and a feeling of belonging, of being able to contribute or of having anything to gain, continues to present an enduring challenge. The invited spaces appear as innovations, but are often fashioned out of existing forms of interaction between government and citizens and re-inscribing existing relationships, hierarchies and rules of the game. In some cases, “invited spaces” have been transplanted onto institutional landscapes in which entrenched relations of dependency, fear and disempowerment undermine the possibility for the kind of deliberative decision making they are to foster.

2.8. Conditions for effective public participation

Public participation takes place for both good governance and public acceptability purposes. Bradbury, Branch, Heerwagen, and Liebow (1994) discovered that public acceptance rested on four central criteria, which they suggested a public participation process should endeavour to meet: (a) technical competence, (b) a fair decision process, (c) the accountability of decision makers, and (d) trust and caring relationships between government or private agencies and publics.
Rosener (1978) noted that for public participation process to be effective, the method used must match the purpose for that particular participation process. Later, Chess and Purcell (1999) argued that such an approach that links the method to the purpose and/or problem may be misguided because it fails to take into consideration that the way a technique is applied may have a substantial, even determining, effect on the performance of a process. Webler and Tuler (2002) argue that it is therefore important to better understand how factors such as (a) the typology of the decision problem, (b) the history of the issue (c) the personalities involved, and (d) the constellation of involved interests influencing the performance of the participation technique all come into play in shaping a process and its outcomes.

Webler and Tuler (2002) developed a theory of Fairness and Competence in Public Participation. According to this theory, the public participation process must be fair, and the participants must be competent to participate.

Fairness refers to what people are permitted to do in a participatory process. When people are to come together with the intention of reaching understandings and making public decisions in a fair process, four necessary opportunities for action by individual participants must be available. They should have the opportunity to

- attend (be present),
- initiate discourse (make statements),
- participate in the discussion (ask for clarification, challenge, answer, and argue), and
- participate in the decision making (resolve disagreements and bring about closure).

These necessary opportunities are relevant in each of the three basic activities that constitute a public participation discourse: agenda and rule
making, moderation, and rule enforcement, and substantive discussion of the issue.

**Fair participation** in agenda setting and rule making means that all involved have the same opportunity to initiate discourse and participate with others in the discussion. For instance, someone should be able to raise a new agenda item and also be able to engage in discussions about the agenda and the rules.

Fairness in the discussion and debate means making sure that everyone has an equal chance to make his or her voice heard and shape the final decision. The ultimate rule for how determinative decisions are made is that consensus is used to select the mechanism by which final decisions are made. That is, it is not required that consensus be used to make all decisions, but consensus must be used to make the decision about how future decisions will be made.

**Competence** refers to the construction of the best possible understandings and agreements, given what is reasonably knowable to the participants at the time the discourse takes place. It is conceptualized as two basic necessities:

- access to information and its interpretations, and
- use of the best available procedures for knowledge selection.

Once information has been brought into the discourse and interpreted, competing assertions need to be resolved. To produce competent understandings and judgments, a process must ensure that the best rules and procedures are used to gather, evaluate, and select knowledge.

In Fischer’s (2006) words, “facilitating participatory deliberation raises, to be sure, the question of criteria: What constitutes successful participation? How do we measure or judge it? Certain procedural characteristics related to the question are fairly clear. We can ask about the degree to which the discussion relationship (i.e., a relationship for talking and listening, asking
and answering questions, suggesting and accepting courses of action) is governed by clear and fixed rules. Are the rules governing who gets to speak fair and equally distributed? Is the discussion open? Is the deliberative agenda transparent to all participants, or are particular elements hidden and secretive? To what degree are all of the participants represented? Here also arises the question as to whether or not there is a difference between how the participants might be represented and how they think they are represented. These questions depend in significant part on the equality of the power relations in the deliberative setting.

No matter what kinds of assertions are made, a competent process is one that pursues mutual understandings before agreement and explicitly decides how disputes will be resolved well before the actual differences arise.

In conclusion, the governance and development discourse continues to embrace citizen participation as a fundamental mechanism of building local capacity towards poverty reduction and local development. Whereas some powers and functions have been devolved to local governments, the cardinal goals of decentralization seem to be elusive, whereby there is less support of the community’s role in raising resources for local development, demanding accountability from their leaders, participating in planning, and choosing their leaders without manipulation from the local ‘elite’ at the time of elections. The unfolding central government control rekindles the ‘recentralization’ of decentralization. Likewise, the central government’s conceived development strategies should enlist participation in order to attain strong local ownership and empowerment.

2.9. Good (local) Governance

Presenting a United Nations’ perspective on governance, Kauzya (undated) described Good governance and local governance as an act of steering a people’s development, Governance is a multifaceted compound situation of institutions, systems, structures, processes, procedures, practices, relationships, and leadership...
behaviour in the exercise of social, political, economic, and managerial / administrative authority in the running of public or private affairs. Good governance is the exercise of this authority with the participation, interest, and livelihood of the governed as the driving force.

Local governance refers to the exercise of authority at local community level. Kauzya (undated) cautions that not every governance practised at a local level would constitute local governance. It is possible to have central governance or even foreign governance at local level. What determines whether governance is local or not is the extent to which the local population is involved in the steering i.e. in determining the direction, according to their local needs, problems, and priorities.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In doing this study, the researcher utilised qualitative research methods:
a. Through reading primary sources, consider the applicable legislation relevant to community participation. This involved a close scrutiny of the existing legislation, its relevance and applicability in South African situations.
b. Through reading and interviews, considered the mechanisms that have been put together by many municipalities to comply with legislation on community participation. Legislation provides for each municipality to develop internal mechanisms to create an enabling environment for community participation. Therefore various municipalities have different arrangements for community participation. This activity included an interrogation of the effectiveness of these mechanisms.
(i) Through interviews, individually and in groups, the researcher obtained the views of citizens on their perception of participation in their communities and the extent to which the municipal council and administrative arrangements have been conducive to meaningful participation.
(ii) Compared the municipal arrangements and the citizens’ views and perception on local participation.
(iii) Drew conclusion on the effectiveness of participation in the selected municipalities

This study is aimed at deepening our understanding of the extent, causes and effects of lack of acceptable levels of public participation in local government institutions, systems and processes. It looked at public
participation within and beyond the statutory structures such as ward committees and Integrated Development Plans (IDP) Representative Forums. It also considered other spaces for public discourse and influence on public policy at local level.

This study took the form empirical study, using mainly primary and secondary data. The researcher was interested on the experiences of participants, namely municipal community leaders, councillors and officials to get their views on what, how and why public participations is effective or ineffective in the identified local municipal area.

The researcher has chosen empirical research because of the nature of the research question “How has public participation taken place in Hibiscus Coast municipality between 2008 and 2011?”

Mouton (2001:53) notes that an empirical question asks something about the World 1; it addresses a real life problem. To resolve an empirical question, we either have to collect new data about World 1 or analyse existing data.

Mouton (2001:137) makes a distinction between the three worlds, what he calls the Three World frameworks.

World 1: The world of everyday life and lay knowledge
World 2: The world of science and scientific research,
World 2 The world of meta-science.

3.1. Research Techniques

In order to get answers that led to a conclusion about the key question, the researcher conducted individual interviews. The interviews took the form of one on one or very small group interviews of not more than three persons. Individual interviews are recommended for situations where a certain level of confidentiality and honesty is sought from the respondent. An interview also provided the
researcher with an opportunity to probe and make follow up on the initial narrative from the respondent.

Bless, Smith and Kagee (2006:124) provided a suggestion for good interviewing. They suggested that;
1. “Use open-ended not closed question: the more pen the better.
2. Elicit stories. Eliciting stories has the virtue of anchoring people’s accounts to events that have actually happened. To that extent such accounts have to engage with reality, even while compromising it in the service of self-protection.”

The researcher asked both open-ended and close ended questions. Close ended questions are most preferred when seeking factual answers such as “Do you participate in ward committee activities” Whereas, open ended questions are most preferred when seeking opinions. An example of an open ended question is “What do you think has been the attitude of civil society organizations to council initiated public participation processes or events?”

The researcher also used the secondary data to get deeper insight of what the other writers, researchers, and opinion makers have to say about public participation in that particular municipality, or district or province. This helped to strengthen or dispel what the respondents had said in interviews. This assisted to provide insight as to what other dimensions should the researcher take note of in collecting and analysing the information that he received.

3.2. Justification for the method

Due to the over-politicization of South African local governance, it has become too difficult to get an honest opinion on how governance happens in the country, free from party political dogma. Even ordinary citizens who are not ordinary suspects in terms of ‘pushing the party line” have become so used
to protecting or vilifying government solely on the grounds of their political beliefs.

Since these are normal and inevitable in a multiparty democracy, which is inherently competitive, it was important to devise strategies to avoid biasness. A one on one interview and the use of follow probing questions would somewhat eliminate the possibility of deliberate misleading responses. Using the individual interviews assists to obtain factual and opinion responses as well as being able to make a clear distinction between the two responses.

A choice of a survey would have been difficult for the targeted respondents. The geographical location of the study is rural and the majority of targeted respondents are illiterate thus making a survey method impossible in terms of administering questionnaires.

3.3. Where and who was involved in the study?
This study was done in Hibiscus Coast Municipality within the Ugu District municipality, in KwaZulu Natal.

3.4. Sample Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Manager/official</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council Speaker (previous and current council)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Councillors (previous and serving)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest Group/ Ward Committee Member</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Society Leader</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Parties</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious leaders</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business person</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Leader</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>59</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER FOUR
DATA PRESENTATION

The data collection, whether secondary or primary, was driven by the desire to unearth what practices are in or out of line with the desired goals of the Constitution and subsequent legislation related to local government and public participation. Linked to that was an effort to find coherence or discrepancies between the provisions of the law and actual conduct of the councillors, officials and the community.

Prior to 1994, the practice of critical engagement was frowned upon by an insular and self-perpetuating state. The apartheid-led government stifled public participation and excluded the vast majority of people in governance and service delivery matters. With the democratic transition in 1994, there was a clear commitment to consultation and participation by citizens as service users of the Public Service.

This stems from a rich history of consultation during the liberation struggle and at the advent of democracy, the Constitution made public participation a fundamental priority and the policy environment was characterised by White Papers that clearly articulated government’s intent and invited extensive consultation and public participation. The Local Government White Paper (1998) that saw consultation from the concept paper to the enactment of several local government Acts, bears testimony to the government’s commitment to a participative process of law making.

In this regard, members of the public were invited to make inputs thus making the process of drafting the Constitution, the White Paper on local Government and subsequent Acts, inclusive and open to the public. The Constitution states that all spheres of government (national, provincial and local) should create mechanisms which would make it easy for people either as individuals or groups to participate in government-led initiatives.
The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, commonly known as the Batho Pele White Paper was introduced in (1997). The White Paper provides a framework through which public services are to be delivered. The White Paper contains eight Batho Pele Principles. These Principles are key directives to the Public Service towards being efficient, effective and responsive to the needs of the citizens. Furthermore, the Principles guide the Public Service on how it should engage with members of the public and provide platform for the public to participate in the provision of services.

One of the key principles contained in the Batho Pele White Paper is the Principle of Consultation. This Principle builds on the Constitutional requirement of public participation and emphasises the need for citizens to be consulted about the services they receive from the Public Service. The Batho Pele Principle of Consultation states that citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of public services they receive and, wherever possible, should be given a choice about the services that are offered. However, the Batho Pele Principle of Consultation should not be seen in isolation to the other Batho Pele Principles. All eight Principles are interlinked. For example, the promotion of the Principle of Access requires that consultation takes place with citizens to better understand their needs and to ensure that services can indeed be accessible to them. Without such consultation, the risk exists that what government regards as accessible service delivery may be different from what citizens have in mind. Furthermore, consultation is critical in the deepening of good governance and democracy because it invites active participation of the public not as service recipients but also as players in decision-making on service delivery.

At local government level, the Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000) puts emphasis on the need to develop a culture of community participation. According to section 16 (1) (a) of the Municipal Systems Act, 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 do the following:
• Encourage and create conditions for, the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality, including in the preparation and implementation and review of its integrated development plan.
• Contribute to building the capacity of the local community to enable it to participate in the affairs of the municipality.

Against this backdrop, the questions posed to the respondents sought to enquire about:

a. the presence and the effectiveness of participation structures and processes.
b. The ability of citizens to use the spaces for public participation meaningfully,
c. The support that is provided by the municipality for public participation, and
d. the community’s knowledge about the existence and the exercise of the right to participate in local governance

4.1. Responses from respondents

Question: 1. Are there any other platforms established (except Ward Committees) for constructive structures representing various interest groups for dialogue within the Municipal area?

The responses from all respondents, that is, community leaders, councillors, municipal officials indicate that there are no other officially recognized processes and structures for public participation, outside ward participatory structures. The interaction between the council be it in the form of the Speaker or the Mayor addressing community meetings through invitation are ad hoc in nature.
There are events, twice a year, wherein the Mayor, councillors, accompanied by the officials meet the community to report back on the planned programmes. These events, known as Izimbizo and budget roadshows are not regarded as too useful, mainly by the community leaders who are members of the ward committees.

These platforms such IDP forums, Izimbizo, budget road shows that are meant to enhance public participation by involving various interest groups for dialogue within the Municipal area. Although these structures maybe part of constructive dialogue but ward committees are seen to be the most effective structures that facilitate dialogue with civil society as they receive statutory recognition. The ward committees and processes platforms are seen to be most effective in terms of ensuring that all communities participate.

**Question 2. Does your Municipality have an effective and functional Community Participation Strategy?**

The municipality does not have a community participation strategy. Responses from officials noted that the provincial government has just provided a framework for participation which has to be customized to the municipal context. The office of the speaker is responsible for this process of the development of a strategy.

**Question 3. How effective are the internal political and administrative structures established to support community processes within the municipality.**

The respondents noted that that there are internal administration and political support structures existing in the municipality but more needs to be done in order to strengthen their capacity. This applies to citizen’s rights and obligation to participate as people are gradually starting to exercise
their rights more aggressively, but the council still needs to expand on building the capacity of communities to participate.

Both the ward committee leaders and the municipal officials noted that the relationship between the community leaders, especially those serving in the ward committees, need to be improved. There are, at times, unnecessary tensions that prevail between the ward councillor and the ward committees, thus negatively affecting the work of the committee as it is chaired by the councillor.

On the other hand the councillors did not report this tension and at times reduced it to a perception based on unclear roles and authority within a ward committee.

There is a dedicated office for public participation headed by a manager in the office of the Council Speaker. This office deals with all activities, structures, and processes that link the municipality and the residents of the Hibiscus coast Municipality. The office provides administrative support to the ward committees, keeps records of the meetings, and attends to the issues raised during committee or community meetings.

Community reported that the structures are not effective. Community participation is sought only during budgeting and Integrated Development Planning processes. The communities do not have the capacity to participate meaningfully as they do not understand the complex planning language used. There is a need for intense capacity building of communities, as well as relationship building between the state and non-state actors. The communities participate fully only if there are development projects linked to their particular areas.

The communities do not have confidence in the municipality as they feel the resources are not used for development but for those who are politically
connected to the decision-makers. The response from officials is that since the Ward committees are relatively new and the processes are new, it will take some time for communities to appreciate the complexities of decision making and how limited resources are allocated to a vast array of needs.

There are very few structures available for public participation. These are the ward committees and the IDP forums.

**Question 4.** How effective are your Municipality’s tools and mechanisms for community participation in the council’s decision making processes such as IDP, Budgeting, and Performance Management?

The tools are in place but are not effective except budget roadshows where the community can participate. When the notion of roadshows and izimbizo was first started in the municipality, it was popular and received high attendance levels from the communities. That has since subsided and the events do not attract much attendance as before. The explanation given by the municipality is that initially these events were seen by communities as fun events for music and food, and not events for serious deliberations on municipal development plans, successes and problems.

On the other hand the community leaders explain that the attendance declined when the communities realized that in these events they are told about the decisions already taken, without listening to the communities’ views. They therefore began to regard them as a waste of time, intended to rubber-stamp already taken decisions.

**Question 5.** Do communities in your Municipal area have knowledge of their rights and obligation regarding public participation in Municipal governance?

The response from communities is that they are not aware of their rights and obligations to participate in municipal processes. The municipality does
not provide them with sufficient information to assist them to participate meaningfully.

Those that do know about their rights and obligations reported that there is no space, except in ward committees, to exercise those rights. The municipality does not recognize matters that arise outside ward committees, izimbizo, and IDP forums. Most people do not know nor exercise their rights. Therefore the municipality must organise a campaign to educate communities on their rights and obligations.

Only the members of the ward committees know their rights and obligations within the municipality. The ward committees have quarterly meetings. They are supported by the office of the Speaker, for minutes, venues, announcements to the public, and filing of records. Though the ward committees are functional, they are still unable to play a monitoring role of the council, and holding councillors accountable.

**Question 6.** According to you, do comments and ideas from citizens during meetings like izimbizo, IDP meetings or contacts with local government officials as mentioned above have any positive impact on how the municipal council spends public funds?

The majority of respondents expressed that Izimbizo are good as they provide opportunity to interact with the community, and they are highly attended in big numbers. However, they also noted a visible absence of some councillors as well as traditional leaders in these meetings.

Some respondents said citizens comments are ignored or do not have an impact in final decisions. While most responded that the citizens’ views expressed during izimbizo and budget roadshows have an influence, others were sceptical of the impact that citizens’ inputs make on the final
decisions. They responded that the citizens can even see the views expressed in these public gatherings reflected in the form of IDP and final budgets.

Some expressed concern about the design of these meetings, complaining that not enough opportunities and time are given to citizens to express all their views, without being pressurised for time.

Another issue raised is that of the citizen’s understanding of the content of the IDP. The document is written in an unfamiliar language to ordinary community members, thus making it difficult to understand and make input into.

**Question 7: How are the stakeholders for public participation identified?**

Stakeholders are identified by municipal officials through izimbizo, and ward committees. The municipal officials are able to identify leaders due to their contribution to municipal process as well as in other forums.

Other stakeholders are identified through the involvement of churches and other sector specific government activities within the municipal area, such as road and transport forums. The municipality has community profiles from which they identify the active organisations and individuals.

**Question 8: What are the main ways to get stakeholders involved in the public participation process?**

Councillors should convene meetings of communities to identify and select people suitable for Public Participation, and holding Local Municipality accountable. These meetings should be aimed at providing feedback to communities, and providing explanations on the plans and progress of development.
There should be workshops aimed at empowering citizens with the skills and knowledge on public participation. There should also be maximum use of the public and community media to announce dates and venues for community meetings.

**Question 9:** What are the main groups of stakeholders involved in the public participation process in your municipality?

UGU DM, all councillors, amakhosi, school governing bodies, Health Forums, NGOs, Rate payers’ organisation, Seniors Citizens forum, Association for the physically disabled. Housing forums, business people, the youth, Community Policing Forums and Community based organisations,

**Question 10:** At which stage of the public participation process (during various municipal processes) do the stakeholders usually get involved?

Stakeholders, especially ward committees feel they get involved only at the first stage, which is at the beginning of the process and at the last stage when the announcement is made that the process is complete. They are not involved during the design, be it for planning or implementation, so that they can have input on the progress or how best to maximize the return on investments.

**Question 11:** Is there a common vision for the future of the development in your municipality? If yes, were all stakeholders actively involved in creating this vision? If no, please explain why not.

No, the vision that is there only comes from the councillors and officials. The public, or its representatives, is not involved in annual strategic planning session. The public is only involved at a stage when the IDP is reviewed and adopted, when the budget is announced, or when the project is being
launched or completed. Communities are involved mainly at the project level and not at an organisations strategic level.

From the officials’ side, it is not possible to involve the public at the stage of developing a vision for the municipality. Creating a vision involves intense strategic thinking and planning, this making it impossible to involve the general citizenry at that stage. Strategic thinking focuses on finding and developing unique opportunities to create value by enabling a provocative and creative dialogue among people who can affect a company’s direction. It is the input to strategic planning—good strategic thinking uncovers potential opportunities for creating value and challenges assumptions about a company’s value proposition, so that when the plan is created, it targets these opportunities.

**Question 12:** *In your municipality, is the public generally considered to be a stakeholder or are they a separate group?*

All respondents replied that the community is considered a key stakeholder by the municipality. The main challenge is for the community to develop the capacity of taking advantage of the public space provided by the municipality and make the best use of it. The community should be able to hold the municipality accountable, and have the means of raising their issues in a manner that makes the municipality responsive to the issues raised.

**Question 13:** *Is the public aware of the importance of public participation in your municipality?*

No, the public is not aware about the importance of public participation. The public does not attend the general meetings convened by the municipality. They only attend if it is Izimbizo or budget roadshows, or when the meeting is about the issues that affect them as individuals, such as allocation of houses, or electrification.
**Question 14:** What are the main ways to get the public involved in the public participation process?

There is a need for civic education and regular public meetings that promote self-management, inclusivity, diversity, building community participation and ownership of local government. Councillors and ward committees should be trained on how to convene meetings report back, and mobilization of stakeholders. Meetings should be convened based on an issue as opposed to calling general meetings to discuss everything within the municipality. This will ensure that relevant, affected and people with an interest attend the meeting.

**Question 15:** Is data, information and knowledge about public participation available to the public? How?

Not all information is made public to the community. The community is informed about dates for meetings without the detail of what will be discussed in a meeting. There is no emphasis on the need for attendance of such meetings.

When the meetings are announced, the municipality uses loud- hailers, local newspaper and radio. Notices are also placed at the library and council offices and building such as the multi-purpose centres.

**Question 16:** According to you, what are the improvements that could be made when trying to inform and involve the public in public participation?

- The municipality should embark on a drive to raise awareness and importance of public participation. This will make the communities aware of the benefits of participation, and that there is legislative requirements that citizens participate on governance.
- Training for community leaders on effective ways of participation.
Making information on municipal processes, plans and systems available to communities.
Municipality should establish structures for public participation, other than ward committees and capacitate them to complement the work of the ward committees.
Use those traditional leaders’ structures for participation in municipal activities.

**Question 17: Is public participation in your municipality mostly voluntary or defined by law?**

It is defined by law. However, those who participate do it voluntarily.

**Question 18: South African law provides legislation, like the Constitution, Municipal Structures Act and Systems Act require the municipalities to implement participation in municipal matters. Does your municipality implement these directives? How?**

The officials responded that they are guided by the law on how and when to involve the public on municipal processes. However, there is still a problem with involving the public on organizational performance management. The municipality is working towards that.

**Question 19: Can you please name any obstacles to the implementation of public participation in your municipality?**

- Huge service delivery backlogs
- Officials do not take Public Participation seriously, and not reserving sufficient resources for Public Participation
- Internal party politics making it difficult for ward committee members to influence the thinking of the ward councillor who is also the chairperson of the ward committee.
- Poor communication between councillors and the communities
4.2. Analysis of the establishment of Ward participatory system in Hibiscus Coast Municipality

In the year 2004, the Hibiscus Coast Municipality resolved to establish the ward committees which would serve as a primary vehicle to promote community participation. The municipality acknowledged the need to get the community to be the major partner if they are to govern and accelerate development. The fact that the ward committee system was a new concept to many communities, made the process very difficult. It must be stated that not many councillors or communities understood the local government systems, budget process, participatory democracy and what it meant.

Even though the council took a resolution to establish ward committees, logistics and the support for ward committees, were left in the hands of individual Ward councillors. It must be noted that not all the ward councillors understood what the legislation required, with minimum resources Ward councillors did what they thought is right. Difficulties were experienced in many ways. In one of the wards, the ward councillor who served between 2006-2010 said instead of going through an electoral procedure, he approached the potential members and invited them to be members of the committee, based on their interest for community matters.

He said “There are teachers, there are business women, there is one person from the secondary school, another one from the primary school, I have people working in the farms, a representative from the traditional council, I also have reverend of the church, so I think it is fairly representative, I have a person that was previously employed by the council, he is now a pensioner, so I think it is fair. I tried to have representatives of everybody.”

This is an example where councillors also battled to understand the concept of ward committees. At some point it was discovered some of the ward committees went through an informal and chaotic process, and are a
representative of very narrow constituencies and that committee members were not aware of their exact role and functions.

The political domination of structures led to political tensions and loss of focus. The ward committees’ structures took on a highly political character. The wards that had an ANC ward councillor were dominated by ANC members and ANC politics. So was the IFP dominated wards. The ward committee that had political dominance were bound to lose focus.

Moreover, there were expectations that participating in the ward committees could entitle one to some kind of benefit. When no benefits materialised, there was no motivating agenda, people became disillusioned, lost interest, resigned from the committee or caused chaos from within. In one ward the Ward committee was dominated by members of a certain political party, which caused a lot of tensions and a loss of focus of the structure. However, other ward committees functioned effectively. Their success relied in the fact that they were inclusive structures comprising of all sectors of the community, such as business, taxi association, traditional leaders, and political parties.

Though the ward participatory system was new in the country, and in the Hibiscus Coast Municipality in particular, the first era of the ward committees in the municipality was somehow exciting; communities participated in the naming and framing problems, priorities of needs in their own communities. It was also characterised by lack of knowledge about local government systems, ignorance, and recent political conflicts within the region of municipal area, feelings of mistrust and more demands for basic service delivery.

Not all the wards worked neither well nor too bad. Needs varied from one ward to another, some needed more attention than the others. The municipality experienced a series of complaints and demand for clean water supply, electricity, houses and many more. Some of the respondents
reported that they hardly saw any developments in their own areas, while some speak about the changes they saw, the meetings they attended or constant engagement with their ward committee, meeting with their councillors. Some said they did not have contact with the ward committees.

Even though problems were experienced, there was much more and continuous engagement and interaction between the community and municipality in various activities of the municipality.

4.3 Strengthening the new Ward Committees.

The new ward committees were elected in 2004; the council had learnt some lessons on participatory democracy and were willing to do things correctly.

From this point the municipality, through the office of the Speaker was able to direct the second elections of the ward committees. Most stakeholders and interest groups were identified and notified about the processes of formulating Ward committees. This process was followed by a series of workshops and meetings, some happening in clusters, a group of neighbouring wards put together. A plenary meeting to launch the process of establishing ward committees was held in order to agree about a process for participation. These workshops intended to emphasis on building the capacity and understanding around ward committees’ role and function. The workshop targeted at a full range of stakeholders and role-players among others, the general public, non-governmental organisations, and community based organisations, the private sector, labour and business. Stakeholders included landowners, shop owners, traditional authorities, churches, schools, civic organisations and resident organisations. The stakeholders and interest groups were identified in conjunction with the Ward councillors in accordance with their respective wards.

The information supplied included the procedures that were prepared by the municipality. It was the business of the ward councillors to call meetings
and arrange for their own ward elections. At the beginning, ward committees seemed to work very well with the municipality with some degree of difficulties, because there was a political will from the side of the council, most of the problems were dealt with. Majority of ward committees particularly in the town and urban area functioned with much ease than those in the rural area and outskirts of town and surroundings. These were able to relate, articulate and communicate the aspiration, needs and frustration of the community to the municipality. They were able to speak for the communities they represent, work with the ward councillor, call meetings and were able to resolve problems and disputes in wards they serve, and identify development plans.

The speaker of the Hibiscus Coast municipality, Mr Nair reported that the ward committees attended workshops on “making you wards committee work”. The aim of the workshops which was attended by ward committee members representing each of the 29 ward committees was to ensure that they understand the function of the municipality, the role and function of the ward committees also the developmental programme of the municipality as outlined in the integrated development plan. Some ward committee members felt the training was effective, they also held the view that it helped the committee members and councillors to understand their role and therefore to become more effective. One committee member, for example said the training and exposure had improved the ward committee participation in the council’s business activities, and wanted to see more of this training.

4.4. Enhancing community participation.

The research reveals that community participation is part of the everyday life in the Hibiscus municipality in various ways. This is evident through the ward committee ‘participation in the IDP process meetings, budgetary process, people attending public meetings, interest shown on attending council monthly meeting, attending community meetings and responding to by-laws.”, says the Speaker of the Council, Mr Nair.
Some of the ward committee members mentioned that they had been involved in the IDP review, IDP Representative Forums and municipal budget. They also admitted that they acted as link between the IDP Representative Forum and local residents, but the need for such a function was not explained given that most Representative Forum activities are open to the public.

IDP participation typically involved needs identification and prioritisation. Some ward committee members mentioned being able to make input on the project specifically earmarked for their neighbourhood, a potentially more meaningful form of participation. Also the committee members mentioned participating in the budget activities. One mentioned it would be very much significant if they are the first to receive and discuss the budget in a meeting organised by the ward councillor before it goes to the council. Even though their participation was more in knowing what has been budgeted, this did not give them the opportunity to say yes or no. It was a mere information or consultation.

Besides participating in the policy matters, ward committees reported to have been involved with monitoring or the provision of free basic services. However when asked to explain their involvement, the only role mentioned was the compilation of list of indigent people within the ward. Many participated in the housing projects, the digging of the trenches for water and sewerage projects, HIV/AIDS campaigns, social crime and prevention projects organised by the municipalities. Their participation has not only brought development in the area but also has shaped the local politics and the way people perceived democracy and service delivery in the municipality.

It must be emphasised that even though ward committees looked more organised, not many people attend the council or ward committee’s activities. Different reasons for participation established a sense of why some communities participate more vigorously than others. The much
wealthier communities, more especially in the coastal area areas such as Margate, Uvongo, Hibberdene, Port Edward suburbs, participated on issues that affected their community and because of their financial background and skills that they have were able to participate more effectively. The poor areas participated more because they needed to survive and their participation was more focus on development participation.

Many communities respond to the ward committee meetings or municipality meetings only when they are affected by either municipal policies or when they are faced with a problem. For an example where the council speaks about the housing, water or basic services delivery problems, those who are affected show much more interest than others. And it is also known that in most developed communities, people tend to take a backseat towards participation than those who are in serious need. Through regular ward committee meetings and the community meetings in the wards, the ward councillor is able to know issues and problems the community experiences, items such as broken street lights, electricity, water queries on bill are discussed.

Public Participation in Hibiscus Municipality enables the ward councillor through municipality to deal effectively with problem as they arise. Ward committee meetings serves as:

• A forum to organise and discuss community issues relating to poverty, unemployment in the ward
• An opportunity for the ward councillors to distribute and share the intentions or monthly goals of the municipality
• A platform to share information and strategies between different sector leaders
• A forum to highlight problems and challenges experienced in the ward and to seek solutions.

Participation in ward committees have been better through organised forums, community based organisations, unions and political structures.
Many individual forums have not shown their interest in participating in the ward committee; but they have also found ways to manage their relationship with the council directly. Various issue based organisations such as those working on HIV/AIDS, Policing and unemployment are now part of the municipal data base and sector forums which are constantly engaging each other on issues of concern.

It must be mentioned that many of the community members who do not participate in such community based structures’ interviewed claimed not to know who their ward committee members are; they also mentioned that the council only comes to them when they needed votes. They also acknowledged that the municipality has been trying very much to improve people’s lives, but not so much difference has been seen.

As the speaker, Mr Nair put it, “participation is the key role of citizens in local democracy and governance. It is not only their right, it is also their duty. Citizen participation builds a better democracy. Citizens get to choose their leaders but also join and play a role in community development in various ways”.

4.5. Analysis of Challenges of Ward Committees participation in the Hibiscus Coast Municipality

The apparent gap between the promise of enhanced participation through ward committees on the one hand, and the everyday realities of participatory politics on the other hand, suggest the need to understand more fully the barriers and dynamics of participation in local governance, as well as enabling factors and methods that can be used to overcome them.

Generally, in South Africa, the culture of democratic practice is new and people did not know how to constructively engage with local government including ward committees. South Africa has just emerged from a situation where there was all focus on liberation activities. This caused a pattern of
resistance and non cooperation to develop. While the new local government was legitimate, it was difficult for people to adjust to. Most citizens were readily available to do as the national or provincial government suggest them do than the local government. People generally expected things to change overnight, and people do not simply know how to constructively and meaningfully engage with the state.

a. Role of communities in Participation
Most importantly communities, as indicated in the response to the questionnaire do not even know that they have a pivotal role to play in the development of democracy and their own environment.

b. Low education levels among the poor sector participants
Participation requires knowledge of issues so that they can make a meaningful and mature contribution. Comprehension level of the community, more especially in the villages was largely below the levels of the issues that were normally requiring participation. Issues of development have technical elements. In some cases even the ward councillors could not publicly explain the development decision because they did not understand the technicalities. This leaves the role and outcome of participation at the hands of the officials, who themselves do not inherently believe in the significance of public participation. Officials are often not receptive and do not acknowledge the importance of citizens’ views. This is because officials consider themselves experts in their field.

c. Participatory skills
As progress is made from lower to higher levels of participation participatory processes became more complex and demanded a different types of skill, knowledge, experience, leadership and managerial capacities. Many of the ward committee’s members such as ordinary people from the communities, such as youth, housewives, including some councillors had very poor educational qualifications.
They had difficulties understanding the technical presentation of the municipality development. On the other hand, when essential planning skills in the planning process were lacking, they also became obstacle for meaningful participation for disadvantaged group. Issues of development have technical elements. In some cases even the councillors could not publicly explain development decisions because they did not understand the technicalities.

Public participation requires a set of skills amongst officials to be able to interact with diverse communities and understand dynamics of the society. Without incentives, officials do not go an extra-mile to involve the public. Lack of community engagement skills also compromises effective public participation.

Community members require information about available platforms for participation. They need to be capacitated on how to get involved in matters that affect their lives so that they appreciate the importance thereof and make a meaningful contribution.

**d. Conflicting interest between Councillors and Ward Committees**

Ward committees are chaired by Ward councillors, in most cases conflict erupted due to the fact that the Ward councillors wanted to satisfy their political mandate rather than improving the lives of citizens. It was also found that citizen participation is about power between the citizen and politicians. The problem was the control of ward committees and process of participation, the setting of the agendas; procedures were usually in the hands of the politicians who in some cases were barriers for effective involvement of citizen.

Mistrust between municipal officials, councillors and communities: lack of transparency and openness often disrupts public participation. Due to past experiences, certain communities have lost trust in government
departments and municipality’s ability and willingness to deliver on community needs.

e. Remuneration/reimbursements.
Due to high levels of unemployment and poverty in the municipality, participation comes with expectation of employment. Participation is a voluntary and time-consuming engagement. It calls for people to put aside their own individual commitments for public issue. Given most residents unemployment situation, participation is a major sacrifice to ask from them. This led to high expectations and hopes that employment would be created out of these exercises. The Hibiscus municipality provides a monthly stipend to ward committee secretaries. This then makes participation in the ward committee to be remunerable, which becomes a source of tension within the ward.

f. Inadequate capacity building for ward committee development.
Capacity building did not take place on the scale necessary to realise the kind of meaningful participation intended. As a result, the first newly established ward committees could not grow beyond the formative stages. It became apparent they did not know what to do and there was no coherent support for them in terms of organisational guidance. The provincial department of cooperative governance provided induction training for ward committees after 2006 local elections as well as 2011 elections. This was aimed at improving the level of understanding of local government by ward committees.

Notably the same capacity building is not extended to the general public so that there is general understanding of what to expect from the municipality.

g. Lack of voluntary participation by professionals
The study reveals that a lot of professional people in the area do not participate in community issues and one might attach several reasons for this. Meetings are held during the day when most professionals are at work
or running their businesses. Over weekends is the time when these professionals attend to their home needs. The professionals who attend the municipal processes do that as part of their work, either working for government, or being development consultants.

**h. Conflict with the traditional leadership**
Control by the municipality over the decisions about the nature and structure of participatory channels restricts and undermines the influence of the traditional authorities. Certain powers of traditional structures of decision making were taken away by the national legislation and granted to the Ward councillors and ward committees. As a result frictions between traditional leaders and democratically elected leaders emerged.

**i. Political will.**
Another problem to strengthening participation involved the absence of a strong and determined central authority in providing and enforcing opportunities for participation at the municipality level, as well as lack of political will by local government officers in enforcing the legislation that has been created for the purpose. Though the function of public participation is located within the office of the Speaker, The council Speaker has no authority to compel councillors (and officials) to support and embrace public participation. Citizens view the officials' involvement in public participation as voluntary, and not forming part of an employee's key performance indicator. Public participation is often seen as a time consuming process.

Often communities are not involved at the beginning of programmes or projects, they are only brought on board when development initiatives have not succeeded in order to manage the crisis and rectify the processes.

It is important that the above-mentioned barriers are considered when designing any public participation initiative, in order to avoid them. Public participation should not be seen as an act of kindness by municipal departments, especially those that are tasked with water, sanitation,
housing, rates and taxes, and roads. The municipality needs to recognise and appreciate the importance of communities taking part in initiatives that affect their own lives.

### 4.6. Target and focus of participation

This study discovered that, at least on paper, there is an acknowledgement by the municipal management, and political leadership that public participation is important, necessary, and desirable. However, a firm belief by the local authority in the value of participation in the process of planning is important but not enough. Participation should reflect careful attention to the design and facilitation of the process. An important facet of the process is to determine the focus of participation, which refers to the question of who should participate in the planning process.

It is argued that this is likely to depend on whether the planning process is focused on an institution, a programme or a community. If the focus is on an institution, then the participants are more likely to be insiders, with less involvement by outsiders. If the focus is on a programme then more public participation with less inside participation is likely. If the focus is on a community then extensive citizen participation is almost obvious (Bryson 1993:3).

In the latter focus of participation, the participation may be based on a geographic locality, a shared interest, or a service-oriented basis (Boaden et al 1982:17). Participation may be the response to a threat, and thus relatively transient, or may develop by means of long-standing memberships of and relationships with local government authorities (Atkinson 1992:17). The most obvious participants in local government activities are residents, landowners, business people, employees, shoppers, travellers through the area, and users of services provided by the local authority. In the South African context, civic associations are important participants because civics
have been central actors in the establishment of a tradition of activism in civil society.

A major problem of the participation process in practice is getting the relevant people involved. Care must be taken to ensure that the citizens who become involved are representative of the general public. The contradiction here is that participation in public management is essential to have, but difficult to generate. More than half of members of the ward committees surveyed do not necessarily represent an identifiable constituency. They are mainly individuals who have an interest in local government, and most with a hope of earning a living through the stipend provided by the municipality. The officials and councillors then encourage these interested individuals to participate in the ward committee, and become leaders.

The sophistication of the approach to participation is important. It is argued that sophistication could come about through a number of techniques that strive to educate and solicit advice from those people who are most concerned with problems at local government level. One technique is to allow the most concerned and committed people to participate in the planning process, while the value of uninformed and closed-minded people is regarded as dubious (Catanese 1984:146). This is not an attempt to exclude any citizen from a participatory planning process. It is an opportunity for universal participation, but with a sophistication that expects those with the most to offer in terms of knowledge and understanding to adopt leadership roles.

In practice it is often found that only a few interested -- but often unrepresentative -- groups of people are prepared to make the effort to participate in local governance. Therefore in spite of the philosophical and practical arguments for citizen participation in public management, the participation exercise will operate only as well as those in the local authority will allow it to operate (McConnell 1981:121).
CHAPTER 5.
FINDINGS
Considering the study in Hibiscus municipality, I can conclude that the community, the councillors, and the officials do want to see public participation taking place and succeeding within their municipal area. They all know the legislative prescripts, the benefits, and challenges of public participation.

However, a close look at the obstacles that are inherently minor, but have the potential of putting public participation at risk, one cannot avoid but ask the question “Do people really want to participate”?

This study somewhat pointed to the role that the officials are supposed to be playing in enhancing public participation but they seem to be reluctant partners. The respondents to the study, including some officials kept on pointing a finger at the officials, saying the officials do not genuinely support public participation. Brynard (2009) noted that the arguments for participation in policy management and planning have indicated that, for a variety of reasons, public management cannot be left totally to the officials and authorities. For practical as well as moral reasons, public participation in policy management and planning in local government and administration is important.

There are two main problems that the study identified. These problems have also been identified in other studies by others scholars. On the one hand, citizens often complain that decisions have been forced upon them by the local authorities or that they have not been consulted in planning at local government level. (Conyers 1982:123). On the other hand, there is evidence to suggest that on many occasions people do not participate actively in local planning even if they have been given the opportunity to do so (Banovetz 1972:56).
It is suggested that a number of factors are important in determining whether people really want to participate in planning. It seems that participation in local planning is usually restricted to those citizens who feel directly threatened or affected by the local government or personally involved in its endeavours. It also seems that people are unlikely to participate willingly in planning if they feel that their participation will have no significant effect on the final outcome. People are also reluctant to participate in local activities in which they have no particular interest, or which are unlikely to affect them directly (Conyers 1982:124). People tend to participate only in planning when there is some specific interest for them in its outcome (Catanese 1984:121).

Another factor is ignorance. It seems that the average citizen, particularly in the rural areas, on the outskirts of the affluent and tourist destination Portshepstone town, has very little knowledge of the range of options (and of the implications of these options) open to him or her in terms of forums which could be used to express his or her views and desires. A substantial number of citizens therefore do not avail themselves of these opportunities to shape policy directly because of inertia or indifference.

Another factor is the communication problems between the authorities, who prepare plans, formulate policies or collect information, and the people whom they try to involve in the planning process. The planners and residents only meet at the annual IDP review meetings, and there is no interaction in between these statutory regulated participation events. These problems amount to practical difficulties such as language problems, differences in attitudes and expectations, and mutual feelings of mistrust, suspicion or resentment (Conyers 1982:130).

A possible solution is for local authorities to educate the people on the range of options available to them. Local authorities, however, should accept that even if people are fully informed about the options open to them, their priorities may differ from those of the authorities.
**Degree of participation.** The notion of participation presupposes that people can influence the proposals made and the planning process itself. But how much participation should be allowed and at what stage of the planning process should participation commence?

The scope of participation should be broad enough to afford all people the opportunity of participating. This implies that the planning process should be as open and participatory as possible. Keeping this in mind, one should remember that creative acts are inevitably individual acts. Creativity does not emerge spontaneously from the crowd. Planning is a creative effort and the origin of a creative idea is usually half hidden and still unknown while the idea circulates. If the planning process at a local government level is simply too high-handed, it is bound to arouse public resentment. Practical examples of this situation in local government are the approval of major developments without prior exposure of proposals to public comment, a reluctance to reveal the implications of proposals, and the anonymity of the final decision makers.

To counter this public resentment of the planning process it is important that participation starts at the beginning of the process, or at least at a very early stage (Caulfield & Schultz 1989:21). The degree of participation is therefore not a matter of information, good relations or persuasion of the people, but of opening local government to the general public and encouraging interaction. The ideal is that participation should be a dialogue, a continuous two-way process between the authorities and the people.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

*How can the Public Participation processes and events be strengthened?*
To facilitate practical implementation of public participation, the municipality has since 2004 implemented various initiatives. These include the following:

1. **Izimbizo**: The political leadership of government, including the Mayor, Speaker, councillors, officials hold public meetings to engage with communities on issues of government policies and service delivery. These meetings should not be mere public exercise. These should be opportunities for serious deliberation, feedback, and reporting. The izimbizo should be a way of demonstrating that the municipality leadership does listen and is responsive.

2. **Individual Portfolio heads** should also hold community outreach events that will be directed at their particular portfolios, in targeted communities on specific issues. This should provide more time and attention to detail of public participation. In that way the event ceases to be cosmetic but deals with substantive issues.

3. **EXCO Meets the People**: This initiative should happen more regularly, in different parts of the municipality, perhaps every quarter. Ordinary communities, not used to being listened to and talking directly to decision makers, will appreciate that the leadership takes time to hear the voice of the people directly, they value the community’s inputs and are responsive to their views.

4. **Public Hearings**: Public hearings of different types should be organised by different departments within the municipality. These should be focused discussion on a particular issue. For example, the infrastructure or disaster management department may organize a focused discussion on the effects of rains on the roads and low lying areas to solicit views on how the municipality and other sector department at provincial and national levels can prevent devastating effects on communities.

5. **Ward Committees functions**: Ward committees are statutory bodies created in terms of the Municipal Structures Act (Act No. 117 of 1998). The purpose of ward committees is to assist the democratically elected representative of a ward (the councillor) to carry out his or her
mandate. Ward committee members are members of the community representing the needs of the people in areas where they live. Chapter 4 (part 4) of the Act requires that municipalities must establish ward committees, with the objective of enhancing participatory democracy in the local government. However, the municipality should go beyond the compliance that is, establishing the committees. The roles and responsibilities can be clarified to add a delegation of some functions to the ward committees. This study showed that ward committees do not regard themselves as having any power or authority on the development plans and implementation in their communities. This leaves them open to abuse and being undermined by the very councillor who is the chairperson of the committee.

6. **Community Development Workers (CDWs):** CDWs are community-based resource persons who collaborate with other community workers to help fellow community members to obtain information and resources from government departments. The aim of CDWs is to facilitate community participation in government initiatives. The value and significance that the CDWs add on public participation still has to be identified. The CDWs should be a resource to the ward committees. Through talking to some ward committee secretaries; it became clear that some CDWs do not add any value because they do not have the knowledge nor the skills for community development and how local government works. They are there in communities because the provincial government has placed them in local municipalities. Ward committees should be capacitated to perform the function of the CDWs.

7. **Hold regular, annual Citizen Satisfaction Surveys:** Citizen Satisfaction Survey is a methodology used to engage with citizens and to establish their views and expectations on service delivery. It is a means of collecting citizens’ feedback on the quality and adequacy of public services directly from the service users of government services. Furthermore, Citizen Satisfaction Surveys provide a thorough basis and sets a proactive agenda for citizens and the municipality to
engage in dialogue to improve the delivery of services to the public. The municipality should use Citizen Satisfaction Surveys to solicit feedback from the citizens on the quality of the services they render.

8. **Officials performance management.** Senior managers sign performance contracts with the Municipal Manager. However, support to public performance is not part of their key performance indicators. It is partly due to that omission that the officials, except those located within the office of the Mayor or Speaker, do not see participation as part of their work. The municipality should consider making public participation part of the senior managers Key Performance Areas.
Bibliography


