

Recommendations

Review salaries

- Review individual packages and benefits
- Review 30% of income limit on salary bill and consider dedicated percentage for technical staff
- Increase stipends for juniors

Discourage early retirement

- Retain all staff to retirement age
- Encourage those reaching retirement to stay on as mentors, project supervisors and advisors

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Challenges – HR issues

HR capacity a major problem

- in terms of drawing up contracts and taking on students
- lack of understanding of the role and benefits to be gained from the LGSETA
- Lack on knowledge on how to claim for training or learnerships
- Skills levies not paid
- WSPs not submitted
- SARS returning skills cheques as some SARS staff do not believe that municipalities should be paying skills levies!

As a result

- Students not being paid
- Rest of staff not being trained, or
- Funds not being claimed

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Recommendations

Provinces to assist with development of WSPs

Support programmes required to address weaknesses in financial departments

LGSETA to assign dedicated staff

- To provide further SETA systems training
- To draw up and drive submission of learnership contracts

Strong management required to demand better of HR departments!

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Challenges – Availability

Too many meetings, workshops and reporting

As a result

- Impacts on the ability to deliver
- Ability to supervise and train
- Impacts on management's availability, thus decision making and causes many delays

Recommendation

- Meetings and Workshops should be cut to a minimum
- Standardized/streamlined reporting across all government departments is essential

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Challenges – Leadership

Most senior staff are ‘Acting’

As a result

- There is no leadership
- There is no direction
- There is no discipline
- There is no demand for performance, resulting in poor quality of work, if any at all!
- Staff do not have the authority to carry out their functions
- Staff are not given support

Recommendation

- Urgently fill MM, CFO, Technical Services Director posts with qualified, experienced and motivated incumbents

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Challenges - Masterplans

Few municipalities have any Masterplans

As a result

- Developments not budgeted for
- MIG funds cannot be applied for
- Integrated development cannot take place
- Development of bulk services is not keeping abreast with township development

Recommendations

- Establish asset registers
- Establish long term growth and demand
- Carry out Masterplanning exercises urgently

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Challenges – Tariffs and recovery

Tariffs and income inadequate because

- Charges not being increased annually
- Invoicing incorrect against tariff agreements with major clients
- Users not being invoiced
- Huge water losses

As a result

- Municipalities selling services to major consumers below cost price
- Municipalities providing free services to those who can afford to pay
- Income much lower than it should be

Recommendations

- Check all major user accounts and agreements (water and electricity)
- Increase tariffs annually
- Tackle WDM nationally

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Challenges - Spillages

Worrying number of spillages caused by

- Lack of maintenance
- Network pipe sizes too small
- Bulk services inadequate

As a result

- Sewerage flowing in streets
- Awful living conditions
- Huge health hazard

Recommendations

- Urgently make special upgrade and maintenance funds available to Thulamahashe and other afflicted areas

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Project recommendation

Many more civil engineering staff are required in local government:

- Allow more projects to be completed
- Address some of the problems associated with staff shortages
- Continue training graduates, students and inexperienced in-house staff
- Bring some stability and motivation to those currently employed
- Give support to MMs and Councils during the process of designing function charts, interviewing and employing additional staff

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Lessons learnt - Project initiation and deployment

- Personalised project introduction letters from DPLG should be sent to each MM, PMU and Technical Services Manager, with a follow up introductory call
- Powerful provincial or national representatives should be present at first meetings to drive development of deliverables and buy-in
- Advertise nationally for students and graduates rather than rely on databases
- Get LGSETA involved in drawing up learnership contracts with municipalities, or have LGSETA pay the students via the management structure rather than the municipality
- Top up LGSETA stipend

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