



25 April 2026

Councillor Kamkam
Councillor Kolwapi
Councillor Busakwe
Councillor Terblanche
Councillor Swart
Councillor Mhlana
Councillor Mangxaba
Councillor Seti
Councillor Olivier
Councillor DeBruin
Councillor Gcabayi
Councillor Nel
Councillor Willemse
Acting MM Mapeyi

Dear Bitou Councillors,

COMPLIANCE WITH THE COMPULSORY NATIONAL WATER STANDARDS AND SANITATION SERVICES STANDARDS IN TERMS OF SECTION 9 (1) OF THE WATER SERVICES ACT

As we are all aware, Bitou is in the midst of a water crisis with the Bitou Municipality having sought the declaration of a state of disaster as a result of water scarcity.

The Bitou Municipality is currently largely dependent on variable abstraction from the Keurbooms River, which is itself reliant on sporadic rainfall, compounding supply uncertainty. The sole storage source, Roodefontein Dam, remains at critically low levels, fed by a poor-yield catchment and subject to a restrictive user agreement. No additional provision has been made in the adjustment budget to address this crisis. At the same time, ageing and failing reticulation infrastructure, much of it asbestos-based, is subject to frequent pipe bursts and requires an estimated R350 million for replacement, while wastewater treatment works are already operating at or beyond capacity and intermittently failing compliance standards.

The Compulsory National Water and Sanitation Services Standards promulgated under the Water Services Act 108 of 1997 and published in Government Gazette 52814 on 6 June 2025 provides:

"11(2) These regulations provide that "Municipalities and WSAs are prohibited from approving bulk user connections to existing water and wastewater systems without having the necessary capacity to service such user connections. This means that a municipality may not approve new/additional bulk user connections to an existing water or wastewater treatment system unless that system has the capacity to deal with the additional load (ability to operate according to technical specifications).

and

11(3) municipalities may not approve any new developments that will connect to an existing wastewater treatment system unless such system has the capacity to deal with the load from the development."

We are thus concerned that Bitou Municipality is breaching the provisions of the Compulsory Water and Sanitation Standards in that it continues approving housing development when the municipality cannot provide adequate water or sewerage services.

In order to address this and to ensure that any new development approvals are assessed in compliance with the Compulsory National Water and Sanitation Services Standards, we request that Council pass a motion requiring that each new development must be considered in accordance with the requirements of the Compulsory National Water and Sanitation Services Standards.

We look forward to your confirmation hereof.

Kind regards,

Tony Blignaut

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