

# MATATIELE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY



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## STRATEGY TO IMPROVE DEBTOR POLICY

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### Approval of Policy

Please note that the implementation of the policy contained in this document is subject to approval and signing off by all relevant Heads and/or Committees, including but not limited to:

- Municipal Manager; and
- Municipal Council.

## INDEX

	<u>Page</u>
<u>PART 1:</u> BACKGROUND	
2	
<u>PART 2:</u> PRINCIPLES	3
2.1 Capacity and Direction	3
2.2 Internal Processes	3
2.1.1 Organisational Management	
2.2.2 Technical Management	
2.3 Customer Care	4
2.4 Financial Performance	4
<u>PART 3:</u> RECOMMENDATIONS	
	4
<u>PART 4:</u> CONCLUSION	
	5

## 1. BACKGROUND

The demands on the municipality to deliver services within its powers and functions underline the urgency to recover the cost of delivery wherever possible, to ensure continuity and expansion of service delivery to the inhabitants within its area of jurisdiction.

## 2. PRINCIPLES

The basic foundation to improve the recovery of Service delivery costs rests on four principles:

### 2.1 *Capacity and Direction*

This is built on the mission, vision, culture and leadership of the municipality and will require clearly defined Strategic Plans and Business plans for service delivery, adequate skilled staff, definition of Powers, Functions, Roles and Responsibilities within the municipality, and co-operation of Strategic partners and outsourcing where required.

### 2.2 *Internal Processes*

This is divided into Organisational management and Technical management:

#### 2.2.1 Organisational Management

The efficiency of the municipality is reliant on the Organisational design, Policies and Procedures, sound Administration and Financial Management, and reliable Information Technology systems.

#### 2.2.2 Technical Management

The delivery of services is reliant on the Facilities, Equipment, Vehicles and Tools, Technical losses, management and Metering optimisation.

### 2.3 Customer Care

This is how consumers perceive the Municipality and its services. Satisfaction can only be achieved through proper community education and involvement, good relationships with all stakeholders, efficient complaints handling and a fair and reliable system of billing.

### 2.4 Financial Performance

The application of the above processes in the day to day activities of the municipality will facilitate customer satisfaction, leading to more users of existing services, improved payment, maximum use of existing assets and resources, and a cost reduction of service delivery.

## 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

The strategies to be employed, with due cognisance of the Principles outlined above, must include the following:

- 3.1 Increase communication to the community, particularly regarding Credit control, Tampering of meters and payment for services, through leaflets attached to municipal accounts, newspaper articles and radio talk shows;
- 3.2 Frontline staff communication must be improved through training, especially where certain credit control and customer care functions overlap.
- 3.3 Address staff shortages in the Debtors managements section:
- 3.4 Perform a Debtors data cleaning exercise, and ensure that validating thereof is performed on a regular basis;
- 3.5 Create a culture of quick feedback to the system to constantly improve the quality of data in the Debtors database;
- 3.6 Remove inactive debtors from the system;



- 3.7 Allow for regular strategic and critical analysis of debtors, with specific focus on service and area;
- 3.8 Implement a system of rewards for payment of accounts by debtors (as envisaged in the Debt Collection Policy);
- 3.9 Investigate incentives to debt collecting agents, and staff tasked with the collection of debt, to improve their performance;
- 3.10 Investigate a system of sweat equity that will enable the indigent and unemployed to “pay” for services rendered by the municipality;
- 3.11 Define the role and responsibilities of the Ward system, and the capacitation required to assist in Debt Collection; and
- 3.12 Co-operate with schools in the area to disseminate information to children regarding municipal service delivery and the recovery of the costs thereof.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The municipality should ensure the highest possible quality of service that is fair and equitable to all its residents, at the lowest cost, with the most economical use and allocation of resources, to ensure customer satisfaction.

The willingness to pay will also be enhanced through communication and the creation of an enabling environment for residents to participate in the affairs of the municipality.