



The city of Harare



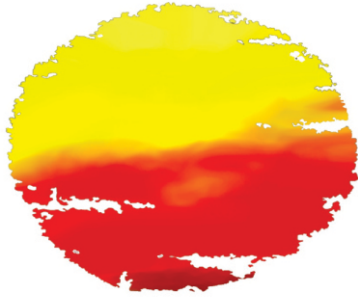
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SUNSHINE



NEWS

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City crafts environment by-law



Mr Chipfunde

Bercy Kuyumani

Harare is introducing an environment by-law meant to protect the environment and mitigate against climate change.

The City's Environment Unit head Mr Lisben Chipfunde said the by-law will be advertised to allow stakeholders to make their input before implementation begins.

"We are at the advertising stage so that we get comments from stakeholders and ratepayers," he said.

He said the by-law covers issues to do with the local

and environmental plan which ensures that residents become part of management of the environment in accordance with the Environmental Management Act. "The by-law will also cover environmental zoning because we understand that in every place there are different environment aspects for example forests, wetlands and other activities that maybe taking place in the city.

These need to be zoned so that strategies on how to control and manage them can be implemented. "It will cover issues to do with urban agriculture in Harare for example we are not allowed to cultivate on wetlands or along our streams," he said.

He said poor environmental management is causing pollution to water sources.

"It will cover management of waste disposal sites such as Pomona and Golden Quarry so that they are properly engineered dumpsites.

Mr Chipfunde said the by-law also covers aspects on environment assessment for certain developments and issues to do with the protection of wetlands, collection and removal of gravel stones and pit sand.

"The by law is geared towards ensuring that the environment is safe for all of us as it will cover air pollution," he said.

Council approves ZWL\$4million budget to decongest the city

Bridget Sibanda

Council has approved a supplementary budget of ZWL\$3 853 870 250 for works meant to decongest the city.

The \$ZWL3 744 475 250 will be used to upgrade road junctions and Amalinda Bridge, ZWL\$40 800 000 installation of new traffic signals on the city roads and \$ZWL68 595 000 for public lighting installations on city roads.

According to the recent council minutes, the Acting Director of Works, Eng Norman Karidza reported that Cabinet sat down in May this year to come up with a solution to decongest the city.

Local Government and Public Works Minister

Honourable July Moyo chaired the committee of ministers set up to recommend short, medium and long term solutions.

"Eng Karidza reported that the programme was a nationwide but Harare Metropolitan is to be the first priority as it the most affected area," read the minutes.

He said the taskforce was requested to come up with solutions around three areas infrastructure improvement, enhancement of public transport logistics and enforcement

"The interventions are to be implemented and funded by each local authority. The local authorities were requested to fund the programme from their pockets as it was not part of the 2021 budget," he said.

City plans to protect wetlands

Edwin Mugabe

COUNCIL has devised a strategy to protect wetlands in the Harare Metropolitan area and is now consulting stakeholders, Environmental Management Unit Head, Mr Lisben Chifunde has revealed.

The strategy is part of the city's deliberate actions to protect water sources and the environment. Mr Chipfunde said the city is in danger having serious water shortages and diseases if activities happening on wetlands are not controlled.

“As a city we would like to be accredited to what is called the wetlands city system which is managed under the Ramsar Convention an international convention responsible for the protection of wetlands.

“Council has finished the draft which we have sent to the PDC to coordinate because this involves other local authorities because what

happens in Chitungwiza, Ruwa and Epworth affects Harare,” he said.

He said the plan is a brainchild of engagements with stakeholders. “We realised that we need to engage stakeholders and discuss issues on how we can protect our wetlands.

“The water that we find in our dams, in our rivers is stored in the wetlands and it trickles slowly into the rivers that is why we have continues flow throughout the year and it feeds our raw water sources.

“We had a workshop last year November which was held with the assistance from Bird Life Zimbabwe and Harare Wetlands Trust and a number of stakeholders.

One of the outcome of the workshop was that we need to come up with a draft implementation plan to protect our wetlands.

“A taskforce was setup and other taskforce members include the Environmental Management Agency (EMA), Ruwa, Epworth, Chitungwiza

and Harare Wetlands Trust and we came up with a draft plan to protect the wetlands that are in Harare including those in each local authority in which they will carry their independent protection measures,” he said.

He said a recent survey on the city's wetlands showed massive destruction and urgent action needed to be taken to protect them.

“These wetlands are gradually getting depleted, we carried out an assessment of the extent of damage that has happened to our wetlands and we noticed that we have lost close to 49 percent of the wetlands in Harare and yet those are the main water sources for the city,” he said.

He said the city will soon engage all stakeholders to start implementing some of the provisions and strategies of the plan.

The Environment Management Unit was created through a council resolution and became operational in January 2019.



SAVE WATER



Every drop counts

Debt collector coming



Staff Reporter

Council is engaging debt collectors for difficult clients. The move will enhance revenue collection and ensure all service consumers contribute towards service delivery.

Council is owed more than ZWL\$7,5 billion by Government, business and residents.

A recent special council meeting council approved the engagement of debt collectors.

Acting Finance Director Mr Livingstone Churu said only difficult customers will be pursued by debt collectors.

Said Mr Churu "Some clients are influential and non-complaint. Council might not have the necessary power to pursue them," he said.

He said collection efficiency for the month of April 2021 was at 35 percent and the collection efficiency rate should be increased to further support service delivery issues.

Mr Churu told Council that his department was targeting at least 70 percent collection efficiency.

Council also heard that some ratepayers had not paid anything since 2013 when debts were written off.

"Therefore, Council was losing out due to late payments by clients, hence the longer council took to collect revenue would result in more losses due to the time value of money concept. The Committee enquired whether the use of a debt collector in debt management had assisted in council debt collection.

Mr Churu told council that there would not be a blanket referral of debts for debt collection as committee approval would be sought before referral of defaulters to debt collectors.

Council requested the Mr Churu to ensure that ratepayers' bills were accurate before referring them to debt collectors.

Following discussion council authorised the engagement of debt collectors for difficult clients to unlock revenue collection.

Council vaccinates employees



Bridget Sibanda

Council is vaccinating employees at their workstations as a way of boosting public confidence and preventing spread of Covid19 to residents who interact with council employees.

Council employees form the majority of frontline workers. Councils are in place to serve the interests of the public hence the decision to vaccinate the employees who day and night are in contact with the transacting public. Council in addition is testing members of the public for Covid19.

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