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Editorial

The municipal elections scheduled for 3 August 2016 provides an opportunity for the electorate of each municipality in South Africa to elect councillors to represent them in the municipal council. Once elected a councillor represents the total community – voters, non-voters, children, disabled, illiterate and even immigrants in the area. This implies that a council has to adopt resolutions and pass by-laws in accordance with the needs of every segment of the community within its area of jurisdiction. Thus policies adopted, funds allocated in the annual budget and the provision of a capable work force should be premised on the promotion of the welfare of all the inhabitants in the municipality.

To enable a council to fulfil its mandate to satisfy the needs of the municipal community it relies exclusively on its personnel corps. Therefore, the effective and efficient administration and management of the municipal affairs depend on the quality of its employees and recruitment strategies. This could only be achieved if properly qualified candidates are attracted and the most suitable ones appointed. Training can only be effective if a person is trainable, that implies he/she should enter the service with an academic standard and experience (for managerial positions) which could allow the employee to be trained. A new appointee in the finance section should already have a proper educational background in financial matters. Similarly the municipal manager as head of administration and accounting officer should possess at least a degree in public/municipal administration and comply with the minimum competencies as contained in the *Local Government: Municipal Systems Act*, 2000 as amended by Act 7 of 2011.

Although it is a legal requirement that municipal managers must comply with the minimum competencies, some municipal councils still attach a high value to political considerations. The result is that the administration and management are not performed according to the principles of public administration, resulting in adverse audit opinions by the Auditor-General and worse than that: the municipal community does not receive the quality of services they are entitled to. The most recent Auditor-General's report abound with cases of irregular expenditure, unauthorised expenditure and wasteful expenditure in municipalities. It is obvious the administrative and managerial practices are not applied judiciously. Although the municipal manager cannot be solely held accountable for this state of affairs, a properly qualified head of administration will ensure that the SYSTEM of administration is effectively constructed and that the management will comply with acceptable public administration and management principles.

In this issue of the *African Journal of Public Affairs* attention is devoted to a variety of facets of policy, ethics and innovative approaches to public administration and management. The following issues are included: **P S Reddy** addresses the localisation of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) particularly to the role of local government. **Merickova, Svidronova and Nemec** investigate innovation in the public service through public participation in Slovakia. The challenges faced in retaining financial practitioners by way of a social contract in the Limpopo Province is investigated by **Van Dijk and Ramatswi**. The perceptions of businesses on the Employment Incentive Act, 2013 in the Vaal Triangle is discussed by **De Jongh, Meyer and Meyer. Croukamp and Malan** focus their attention on

public policy uncertainty, regime contests and disinvestment in South Africa. This is followed by **Tshombe and Molokwane's** analysis of public private partnerships in Sub-Saharan Africa. Self-leadership as an antecedent of authentic leadership: an empirical study among public sector employees is addressed by **Kotze. Klingelhöfer, Erasmus and Teka** investigate the mechanisms required to improve financial oversight of development finance institutions. **Pillay** brings the challenges concerning ethics and accountability in South African municipalities in their struggle against corruption to the attention of readers. **Koma** devotes his attention to the question whether the current process of rationalising municipalities could improve municipal governance. **Mantzaris** adds to the dilemma of ethics by investigating the phenomenon linking it to inequality, corruption in the middle class in South Africa. In the second last article **Van der Waldt and Greffrath** develop a typology of government interventionism in municipalities. The last article is contributed by **Chitiga-Mabugu** who investigates the applicability of economy-wide techniques as a tool to understand policy impacts.

J O Kuye Chief Editor

