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# Pastor Mdlalose assumes top post

PASTOR Ndumiso Mdlalose is the new chairman of the Town Clerks' Forum.

The Hwange Local Board (HLB)'s town secretary was unanimously nominated to the top post at the Town Clerks' Forum annual meeting held in Victoria Falls on 11 December.

The forum draws its membership from all the 32 urban councils in the country.

Prior to being elected on substantive basis Pastor Mdlalose was the body's deputy chairman and had been acting chairman for almost a year in place of Chitungwiza Municipality town clerk Dr George Makunde.

Pastor Mdlalose is being deputised by Bulawayo City Council town clerk Mr Christopher Dube.

"I'm grateful for the confidence vested upon me by my colleagues. It's not a small feat and I hope I won't disappoint. I have been acting for some time and it's a welcome development to be doing the work on substantive basis. In all honesty it's a gratitude for me to be given this opportunity by my God, to lead. What I then ask from him is the wisdom to deliver," said the clergyman.

Pastor Mdlalose said his

elevation to the helm of the forum was expected to play a pivotal role in improving service delivery and spearheading development in Hwange.

"It's an opportunity for us (HLB) as a small local authority to interact at the highest level with other bigger local authorities. It's beneficial to us because it accords us the chance to drive this small local authority forward," he said.

Pastor Mdlalose said there was a need for the forum to foster good relations between the Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe and Government so as to enhance development in the country.

"The Ministry plays a supervisory and advisory role to local

authorities. We are the third tier in Government. There is the central (government), provincial and local authorities.

"So, we need to add meaningful contribution to the development of the country. We must work with integrity, which is one thing we need to push for so that we get all the respect we deserve from the Ministry," he said.

Pastor Mdlalose further hinted that local authorities play an integral role in complementing Government efforts in promoting the country's economic growth and development in pursuance of the national vision of transforming the economy into an upper middle-income status by 2030.

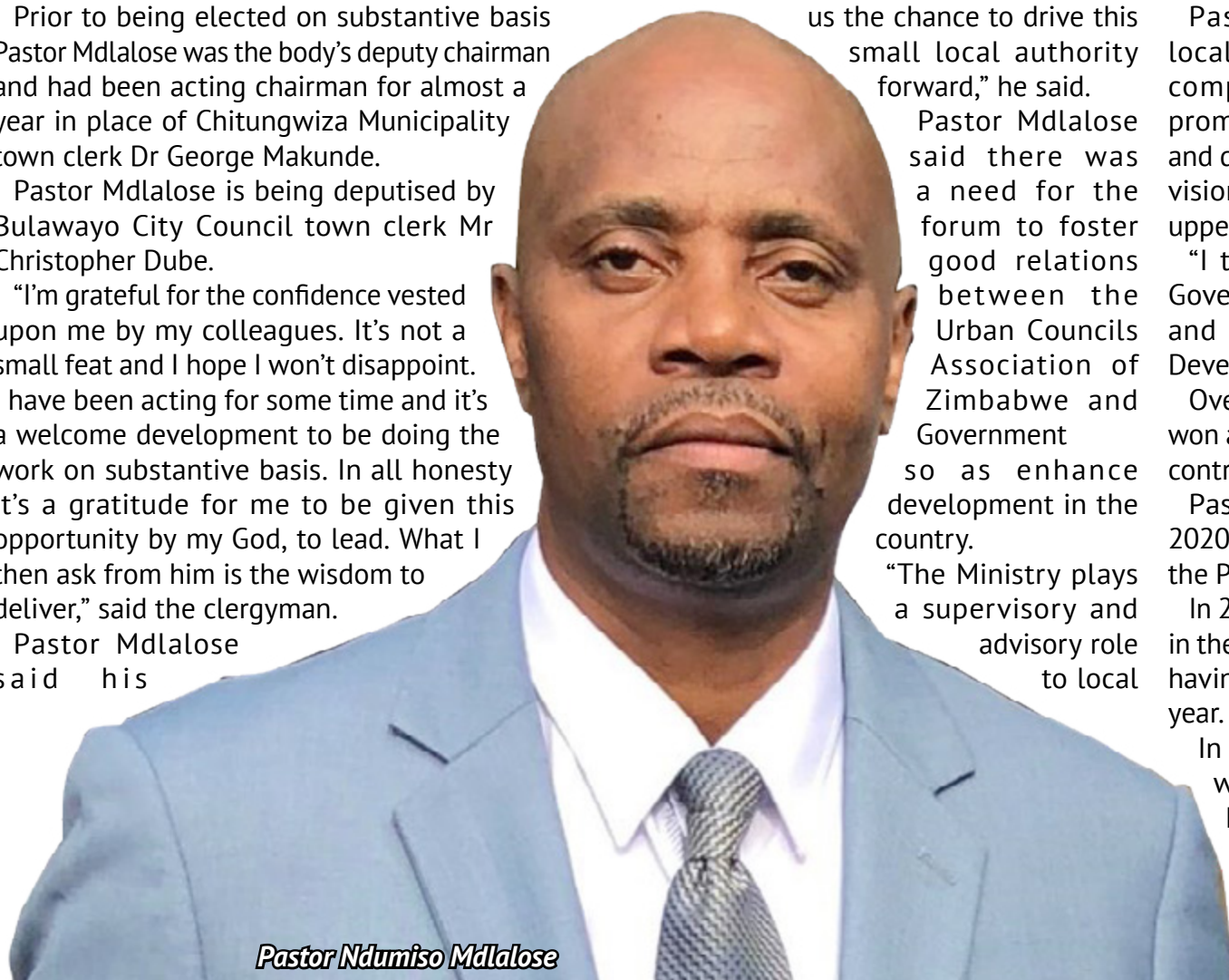
"I think every council's task and that of Government is to drive towards vision 2030 and the immediate focus is the National Development Strategy I," he said.

Over the past few years Pastor Mdlalose has won a number of accolades for his outstanding contribution at the local authority.

Pastor Mdlalose is in the running for the 2020 National Megafest Business Awards in the Public Sector Leader of the year category.

In 2019 he scooped the town clerk of the year in the Local Government awards category after having been the first runner up the previous year.

In 2017 he played a huge part when HLB won the Water Supply and Waste Water Management at an awards ceremony held during the Local Government Investment Logic Conference in Harare.



*Pastor Ndumiso Mdlalose*





*Hwange Local Board Chairman Councillor Nqobile Ocean Mabhena (right) chats with Local Government and Public Works Minister July Moyo (Second from right) at the First Lady Amai Auxillia Mnangagwa's charity fundraising golf tournament in Victoria Falls*



*First Lady Amai Auxillia Mnangagwa takes a swing*

# HLB shines at First Lady tourney

HWANGE Local Board (HLB) managed to give a good account of themselves at the First Lady Amai Auxillia Mnangagwa's charity fundraising golf tournament held in Victoria Falls in December.

Zimbabwe Golf Association Matabeleland North representatives and one of Hwange's leading golfers, Stephen "Zero" Simukai described the golf tourney as a resounding success with a potential of growing into one of the biggest golfing events in the country.

"The tourney went on well and the level of competitiveness was quite high. Of course bearing in mind that it was for a worthy cause initiated by the Mother of the Nation," he said.

The event, which was at held at the Elephant Hills Golf Course was hosted by Urban Council's Association of Zimbabwe and featured close to 100 golfers drawn from individuals, private sector, local authorities and Government departments.

The tournament was organised as a side event to the Zimbabwe Local Government Association's Women in Local Government

Forum, which was officiated by President Mnangagwa.

Simukai said the HLB team comprising of himself, Pastor Ndumiso Mdlalose, Christian Lungu and Sylvester Tshamala gave a good account of themselves.

The match was played in a four ball format with Simukai first partnering Pastor Mdlalose while the other team was made up of Lungu and Tshamala.

The latter came out on sixth position with a score of 39 points while the former was on position 10 with 36 points out of 24 teams.

"We managed to acquaint ourselves well because we didn't even prepare for the match. Considering that the field was made out of 24 teams our performance was good.

"Next time we will be better prepared for the tourney and we should be able to demystify golf to all age groups within our community for the development of the sport," said Simukai.

HLB chairman Councillor Nqobile Ocean Mabhena, Housing Director Ananias Banda and

public relations officer Dumisani Nsingo were the local authority officials that accompanied the golf team.

The HLB delegation was one of the few, which was dressed for the occasion, putting on royal blue branded golf shirts and black caps. The local authority also dressed Ministers and some executives that attended the event.

The inaugural tournament which is set to be an annual event, was aimed at raising funds for development of Chambuta National Children's Rehabilitation and Skills Development Centre in Chiredzi.

Close to \$2 million and US\$3 135 was raised through pledges and auction.

Pastor Mdlalose hailed the First Lady for her philanthropic works which have helped to shine a light on living conditions of most less fortunate members of the society across the length and breadth of the country.

"Community leaders should take a leaf of this initiative by the First Lady and many of her philanthropic works to assist the need in their localities...", he said.



# HLB pushes to curb littering

**H**WANGE Local Board (HLB) is working on coming up with environmentally conscious initiatives aimed at reducing rampant littering in its area of jurisdiction, an official said.

HLB environment health technician Mr Nqobile Ndelaphi Mabhena said the local authority will conduct a Solid Waste Characterisation, Quantification and Management study as part of its efforts to improve cleanliness of its environment.

“We want to conduct a Waste Characterisation, Quantification and Management study that will ascertain the type and amount of waste generated in our area of jurisdiction,” he said.

Mr Mabhena said the Solid Waste Characterisation, Quantification and Management study would enable the local authority to formulate an Integrated Solid Waste Management (ISWM) plan.

“The study will inform planning of waste management through the crafting of the ISWM plan that will include the participation of the community which is the waste generator. We can’t craft the ISWM plan when we don’t know the type of waste we are producing and the quantities,” he said.

ISWM is a comprehensive waste prevention, recycling, composting, and disposal program.

An effective ISWM system considers how to prevent, recycle, and manage solid waste in ways that most effectively protect human health and the environment.

“We have included the Solid Waste, Characterisation, Quantification and Management study as well as the ISWM in our 2021 Budget,” said Mr Mabhena.

HLB has over the years made numerous initiatives towards effective solid waste disposal. In 2012, the local authority provided most households in its area of jurisdiction with refuse receptacles as part of its efforts to guard against littering.

“The refuse receptacles that we distributed in 2012 are now worn out. So people are no longer having proper refuse receptacles and are resorting to using sacks and these are not user friendly. We will have to put something into our budget for the procurement refuse receptacles,” said Mr Mabhena.

Of late the local authority has been battling to curb illegal solid waste dumping which has been on the increase in residential areas and along main roads.



*Green Shango Environment Trust members picking up litter in Empumalanga*

As a way of discouraging this malpractice, HLB introduced an illegal solid waste dumping whistle blower facility whereby it rewards anyone who reports an individual or organisation for littering.

“At times we concentrate on door to door household refuse collection instead of clearing illegal dumpsites. We have to attend to illegal dumpsites and do general cleaning of the streets as well. It serves no purpose to collect from the households when the streets are dirty,” he said.

He however, said the local authority had significantly improved in households refuse collection.

HLB been participating in the national clean-up campaign since its launch by President Mngagwa in 2018.

“We had a very good mobilisation strategy before the advent of Covid-19. However, after the outbreak it became very difficult to mobilise people. We have lost touch with most of our community members who we used to mobilise for the clean-up exercises...,” said Mabhena.

He further commended organisations that have assisted the local authority during the clean-up campaign.

One such organisation, which has pledged to assist HLB in addressing environmental

imperatives.

Green Shango Environment Trust was established at the backdrop of rampant and unprecedented levels of environmental degradation and massive pollution of air, water and communities.

HLB town secretary Pastor Mdlalose said the local authority’s waste management efforts were in-line with the Service Level Benchmarking (SLB) whose main thrust is to identify service level gaps at all urban local authorities.

“Our efforts to eradicate rampant solid waste dumping are in-line with the SLB programme, which encourages local authorities to embrace waste management and various initiatives,” he said.

SLB is a process whereby urban local authorities peer review each other on water supply, wastewater (sewerage) management and solid waste (refuse) management, roads and public safety and corporate governance.

SLB is being implemented in all 32 urban areas though an iterative, interactive and participatory process of service level data gathering, analysis and a peer review mechanism to analyse service levels against agreed benchmarks.

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**Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change. – Stephen Hawking**



# HLB defies bad year

**H**WANGE Local Board (HLB) chairman Councillor Nqobile Ocean Mabhena says the local authority managed to embark on a number of capital projects despite the adverse economic impact of the coronavirus (Covid-19).

Cllr Mabhena said the advent of Covid-19 in 2020 did not only negatively impact on the country's economy but its ripple effects were also felt by local authorities, including HLB.

"Local authorities in the country found themselves reeling under the adverse economic effects brought about by the (Covid-19) pandemic. Basic service delivery and capital projects roll out suffered.

"Revenue collection depleted as most residents heeded the Government's call to stay at home under lockdown regulations. Many residents lost their sources of income and Council suffered," he said.

Cllr Mabhena however, said despite the impact of Covid-19 the local authority managed to carry out a number of infrastructural developments in its area of jurisdiction.

"Despite all these challenges council managed to soldier on, propelled by disbursement from

treasury through the Devolution Fund and internal funding," he said.

The local authority is in the process of completing construction of an Early Childhood Development (ECD) block at Nechibondo Primary School through utilising the Devolution Fund. The ECD block comprises of three classrooms and self-contained ablution facilities.

Using the same fund, HLB also erected a perimeter fence as well as installing a water storage facility at its Empumalanga clinic. It is also in the process of constructing an incinerator at the health facility.

"Using its own funds, Council embarked on a project to connect water to about 600 households at Empumalanga Phase 4. In a similar fashion Council embarked on a project to construct a boardroom as well as renovating its old property and turn it into offices," said Cllr Mabhena.

The water reticulation project and construction of the board room are expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2021.



*Councillor Nqobile Ocean Mabhena*

## CORONAVIRUS SAFETY

Follow these easy steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.



Disinfect surfaces around your home and work.



Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds.



Sneeze or cough? Cover your mouth.

# Council to convert bus terminal into vending site

**H**WANGE Local Board (HLB) is working on converting its bus terminus in Empumalanga suburb into a vending site in a move aimed at maintaining cleanliness of its environs and improving revenue collection from the informal sector.

HLB town secretary Pastor Ndumiso Mdlalose said the local authority has resolved to put up vending bays at Empumalanga bus terminus to enable registered vendors to conduct their business activities at a designated place.

“We intend to turn that bus terminus into a proper marketplace with vending bays. We have realised that the terminus is no longer serving its intended purpose, thus the reason we are seeking to utilise the infrastructure for a more viable activity,” he said.

The terminus was constructed in the 80s but the number of buses and omnibuses making use of it has been dwindling over the years as commuters are increasingly preferring to travel in light vehicles.

Light vehicles are proving to be popular among travellers as they spend less time at the terminus due to their tendency of randomly picking up commuters at any point along their routes.

Pastor Mdlalose said the local authority

was looking forward at refurbishing ablution facilities at the terminus as part of its efforts of creating a conducive and convenient work place for vendors and their clients.

One of Empumalanga’s renowned vegetables hawker Mr Elton Mguni said there was a need for the local authority to expedite the conversion of the terminal into a vending area.

“We are quite grateful that Council is considering turning this terminus into a vending place but it seems there are taking long to put up proper facilities for us to operate from. The infrastructure at the bus-station especially the toilets continue to suffer years of neglect and vandalism from residents,” he said.

Mr Mguni is one of the longest serving vendors in Hwange urban having been involved in the trade for more than 20 years.

He said operating from a designated area plays a significant part in formalising their vending business.

“Operating from a designated place enables Council to frequently monitor us with regards to hygiene issues. Our operations will also be easily formalised since the local authority would be having some form of a database thus enabling it to easily license us,” said Mr Mguni.

He said efforts are being made to form an association so as to improve interaction with



*Mr Elton Mguni*

the local authority.

“We have plans to come up with a vendors association so that we can improve on our communication with Council on various issues pertaining to our operations,” said Mr Mguni.

## Council moves to curb illegal developments

**H**WANGE Local Board (HLB) has covered considerable ground in identifying illegal infrastructural developments in its area of jurisdiction, an official has said.

HLB town planner Mr Themba Sibanda said the local authority has managed to clear most pending infrastructural development bottlenecks.

“We have cleared a backlog on most development control issues. These include mostly illegal developments serve only for those that are a bit complex and need Council resolutions such as change of use without Council’s consent. However, these have been brought to the attention of the engineering and housing directors for presentation to Council,” he said.

In October, the local authority embarked on an exercise to identifying illegal structures and developments in residential, commercial



*Mr Themba Sibanda*

and industrial areas with a view of improving standards of facilities constructed within its locality.

The local authority has done land use compliance in some residential areas and shopping centres in Empumalanga suburb.

“We have partly done land use compliance

verifications at Empumalanga 1 and 3 as well as at the suburb’s shopping centres. However, a lot is not well as some shops have double frontages while some operate from storerooms without change of use consent by the planning authority,” said Mr Sibanda.

He however, said the local authority has made significant strides towards enhancing its infrastructural development compliance standards.

“We appeal to our clients to comply with development conditions or face stiff penalties,” he said.

HLB is also in the process of gathering planning data in an effort to come up clear with a land bank for future development and preparation of a master plan.

“The updating of property register is on-going for the purpose of having accurate information for all the properties within our area of jurisdiction,” said Mr Sibanda.



# Mhlanga calls for stakeholders' participation in fight against Covid-19

**E**MPUMALANGA clinic sister-in-charge Sindiso Mhlanga says there is a need for all stakeholders to participate in the fight against the spread of coronavirus (Covid-19) in Hwange District.

Sister Mhlanga said community leaders and authorities should take the lead in the fight against Covid-19 through disseminating information on the severity of the viral infection as well as encouraging behavioural change among the general populace.

"Copying with Covid-19 at home needs the involvement of all stakeholders, these should include the police, councillors as well as health care workers. This will enable people to understand the severity of this infectious disease," she said.

Empumalanga clinic is a Hwange Local Board run health facility.

Sister Mhlanga is one of the most experienced infection prevention and control health care experts in Matabeleland North Province. She has a post graduate diploma from Stellenbosch University in South Africa.

She was once attached as an Infection Control Consultant trainer at the Infection Control Africa Network and Center for Disease Control in Sierra Leone in 2015 and in 2016 she worked as an infection control specialist in the same country under the auspices of the World Health Organisation.

Sister Mhlanga is also a member of the Infection Control Association of Zimbabwe.

The health care expert said there was a need for people to be imparted with the requisite knowledge on Covid-19 to guard against unwarranted catastrophes.

"We (stakeholders) need to explain what Covid-19 is to the general populace and how it's transmitted and it's signs and symptoms," said Sister Mhlanga.

She further said the new strain of the infectious disease has devastating effects to everyone across ages.

"Those who are mostly at risk are the ones with comorbidities disease like diabetes, HIV, various infectious diseases and the elders, but the strain which is there now literally attacks everyone. Everyone is at risk as long as we don't practice what is required by the Covid-19 guidelines," said Sister Mhlanga.

Covid-19 is often more severe in people 60+yrs or with health conditions like lung or heart disease, diabetes or conditions that affect their immune system.



*Sister Sindiso Mhlanga*

"Covid-19 has no treatment because it's of viral origin but we can treat other symptoms such as chest pains and coughs. One has to be tested if they have been in contact with a positive person or if they are not well and exhibiting signs and symptoms of the virus," said Sister Mhlanga.

Covid-19 affects different people in different ways. Most infected people develop mild to moderate illness and recover without hospitalisation.

Most common symptoms are fever, dry cough and tiredness. The less common ones are aches and pains, sore throat, diarrhoea, conjunctivitis, headache, loss of taste or smell, a rash on skin, or discolouration of fingers or toes.

The serious ones are difficulty breathing or shortness of breath chest pain or pressure loss of speech or movement.

HLB vice-chairman Councillor Admire Munhenga urged his colleagues to be exemplary in the fight against Covid-19 by adhering to the viral infection's protocols as well as informing residents about the risks of contracting the disease.

"As councillors we should be exemplary to the residents through adhering to all set Covid-

19 guidelines and regulations. We should also inform residents about the dangers of this disease.

"The number of deaths are rising on daily basis throughout the country and we aren't seeing it much here in Hwange because of our small population but be that as it is we are more susceptible because of that," he said.

HLB town secretary Pastor Mdlalose said the local authority has contributed immensely in the fight against Covid-19 in the district.

"As a local authority we have contributed a lot towards the fight against Covid-19 and one of our major contribution is our involvement in the establishment of an isolation centre at Five-Miles hospital," he said.

Pastor Mdlalose further reiterated Sister Mhlanga's sentiments for the need of concerted efforts by all stakeholders in the fight against the spread of the pandemic.

"I would like to commend one of our local businessmen, Mr Stephen Simukai for recently donating sanitising sprays. We are therefore calling on the business community to emulate this worth cause in our fight against this deadly infection," he said.