

# GRAPEVINE

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CAPE WINELANDS DISTRICT  
MUNICIPALITY • MUNISIPALITEIT • UMASIPALA



Ald (Dr) Elna von Schlicht  
Executive Mayor



Henry Prins  
Municipal Manager

MARCH 2021  
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## A Municipal Reflection on the Pandemic

On 27 March 2020, the citizens of South Africa and the Cape Winelands District woke up to a new environment. This environment contained an invisible enemy and called on everyone to change the way in which we live and interact. The past year has been devastating, with Covid-19 causing the loss of at least 1 485\* lives in the Cape Winelands District and contributing to massive job losses. The Cape Winelands District Municipality (CWDM) shares in the grief that friends and family of the deceased have experienced.

The CWDM held its first meeting to discuss the impact of a possible lockdown and threatening pandemic early in March 2020. The municipality had previously prepared a business continuity plan to mitigate losses in the case of a disaster. After lengthy discussions, the divisions of human resources, disaster management, support services, performance and risk management, IT and their management teams were satisfied that the municipality could continue functioning effectively in the event of a lockdown. The plan identified essential services personnel, those who were required to work remotely and those who would be unable to work from home.

Thus, when the lockdown was announced, the CWDM could assure citizens of service delivery in line with regulations. At the time, the lockdown was planned to last for a period of three weeks however, this week marks a full year since we have entered various levels of lockdown during the state of disaster.

"The challenge in these uncertain times is not only in terms of service delivery and maintaining our mandates, but in ensuring that we continue listening to and reacting on the needs expressed by our citizens. We need to search for and find innovative ways in which to remain relevant and valuable to our citizens," stated Henry Prins, Municipal Manager of the Cape Winelands District Municipality during a virtual meeting. The municipality's response to the pandemic was varied and extensive. "The overwhelming humanitarian needs expressed by our communities were addressed in a number of ways. We were able to reallocate funding to assist our local municipalities in providing various relief measures. We forged new partnerships that helped distribute food to those who needed it most. And we continue to seek opportunities to grow the employment market and re-establish our strong tourism sector. It is humbling to be in a position of leadership during this time," shared the Executive Mayor of the CWDM, Ald (Dr) Elna von Schlicht, at a recent online forum.

As a district municipality the CWDM is mandated to act in a supportive capacity to local municipalities in respect of disaster management. In this regard, the Disaster Management division had by the end of March 2020 established the Joint Operations Command (JOC) comprising a multidisciplinary team of role-players from various sectors.

The core function of the JOC was, and still is, to identify and mitigate the negative impact of the pandemic on citizens. With the cooperation of municipal officials and strong partners, the committee during the past year identified, responded to and addressed various issues, including:

### The humanitarian crisis

- Caring for the homeless by providing shelter, meals, hygiene packs, mattresses, blankets and chemical toilets
- Assisting at food kitchens and meal banks at schools
- Ensuring compliance with health protocols
- Distribution of donated foods

### Social wellbeing

- The increase in GBV and neglect of children were addressed through an awareness campaign
- Sanitary wear was supplied to NPOs who shelter women and children

### Community safety

- Local law enforcement, friendly traffic stops and checks, ensuring compliance with prevention protocols
- Enforcing regulations such as curfews and alcohol sales

### Municipal Health Services

- Assisted at schools, advising teachers how to implement and maintain safety protocols
- Assisted at funeral homes to ensure that those who passed away due to Covid-19 were treated correctly and that safety regulations were followed
- The MHS teams were integral in ensuring that all processes involving produce for human consumption were implemented and followed

### Business and economic rejuvenation

- Addressed job losses in the tourism and hospitality sectors by partnering with DEDAT and WESGRO and established new options for income generation, such as the promotion of CWDM film locations
- Supplied and distributed SMME compliance toolkits to ensure small business continuation
- Hosted a number of campaigns and competitions to encourage visitors to the district (when regulations allowed)
- Negotiated the extension of informal trading permits and promoted small business growth through webinars and local economic development funding.

"We can honestly state that were it not for the partnerships we had developed prior to the pandemic, our district would be in an even more precarious position. We were able to build on existing partnerships and develop new ones.

"Through our relationship with Santam, we were able to tailor awareness messaging, distribute smoke alarms and assist local municipalities with Covid-19 prevention equipment, to mention but a few. Together with our LTAs and WESGRO, we could help rejuvenate tourism in our area. In partnership with Agri Wes-Kaap, we were able to access fruit donations for the most vulnerable.

"Partnerships are key during a crisis, and I invite those who wish to be involved to consider the CWDM as your part of entry," said Henry Prins at an engagement to recognise the role that private industry has played in the pandemic.

The Technical Services division is not only responsible for the maintenance of roads, but also implements various projects aimed at improving the quality of life. Despite immense challenges, the team continued delivering on their mandate by:

- providing pavilions to rural sports clubs
- using the award of 68 subsidies to install solar geysers at farm worker houses
- finalising the district waste management plan that will address landfill sites
- continuing with the maintenance of the 3 200 km of gravel and rural roads in the district and completing the construction of a new road that will provide safe transport for harvests, school-going children and visitors to the area.

Through various projects, the municipality has maintained and extended the EPWP that provides employment to many citizens who clear alien vegetation, cut grass and maintain road verges on an annual basis. Other planned projects such as ECD support, the provision of training opportunities and the Top Achiever award ceremony continued as agreed with Council. The CWDM's Fire Services training academy celebrated the graduation of a number of fire fighters in November 2020.

The Financial and Strategic Support Services division was required to manage the challenges posed by the pandemic to planned spending and projects. Despite these challenges, full financial services continued, including the work of the budget and treasury office. This ensured the continuation of service delivery and the assurance of cash flow for the many suppliers of the CWDM. During the fourth quarter of 2019/2020, decisive action was taken when the need for additional funding arose.

From 15 March 2020 to 12 March 2021, the CWDM has allocated almost R15 million to pandemic-related activities. This includes an amount of just under R11 million allocated to the local municipalities for community support. The remaining R4 million was allocated to various projects, as described in the graph below. The financial management took place in a highly responsible manner, so much so that the Auditor-General awarded the CWDM their 7th consecutive unqualified audit opinion with no findings, also referred to as a 'clean audit'.

The Mayor stated, "This proves that even during challenging times the municipality is able to deliver services within the strict framework of financial governance."

The CWDM extends its sincere recognition and gratitude to all partners and colleagues who played a role during the last year. Despite the threat of a third wave and an increasingly challenging economy, we look forward to moving forward together and trust that our partnerships and team approach will continue to serve the citizens of the Cape Winelands District.

In the memory of those who have gone before us, we are reminded of the saying, "If you wish to go fast, go alone. If you wish to go far, go together".

\*Figures correct as at 12 March 2021 for the Cape Winelands District.



Fruit Distribution



MHS - Global Handwashing Day



Our IDP took place virtually in 2020.



Fire Services Graduation



Job creation: Alien vegetation clearing



Caring for the elderly: Diaper Handover

## SAVE LIVES

**Wear a Mask**

**Keep a Distance**

1.5m

**Sanitise Hands**

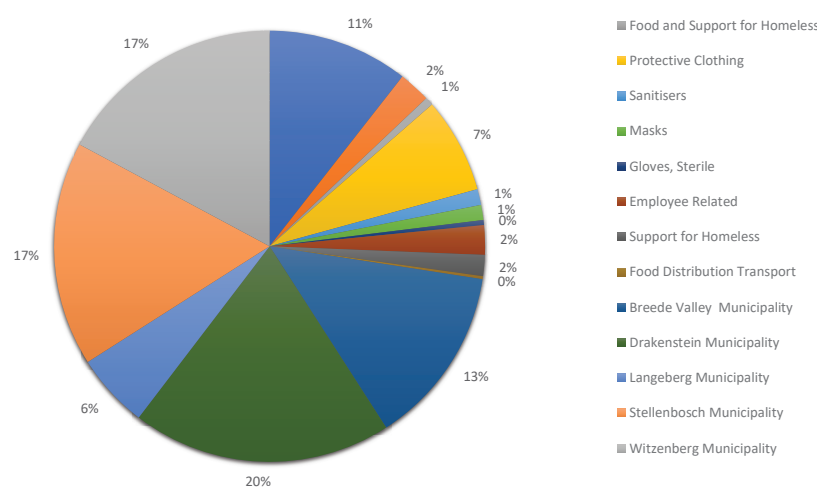
#SafeMyBru

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"In these very uncertain times in which we now find ourselves, our service continues as normal except for all the security measures in place. We just held a HAZMAT workout and used it as a Covid-19 case and disinfected the buildings at our Stellenbosch Roads depot."

- Shift Commander, Gustav Burger

15 March 2020 – 12 March 2021  
CWDM Pandemic Spending: R 14 858 066,49



Get in Touch  
With Us



0861 265 263



admin@capewinlands.gov.za



www.capewinlands.gov.za



CapeWinlandsDM



@CapeWinlands\_DM1