

For many years residents have been complaining about the bad service at the Department of Home Affairs' office in Tzaneen.

A letter received by the Herald from a resident who wants to remain anonymous, stated that she recently went to the Home Affairs office at 06:30 and had to wait for hours before she could get any help.

"I am writing this to you today as I stand in the filth and in the blazing sun outside the Tzaneen Home Affairs waiting to collect my passport and identity document (ID).

"I arrived at 06:30 and over seven hours later, I am still standing here. How can a government department treat their fellow South Africans in such a poor manner?"

"The elderly and babies are literally sleeping on the pavement and alleyway as they can no longer stand in the queue," she said.

"It is absolutely disgusting that the government cannot provide facilities to accommodate people in a dignified and healthy environment."

She said that when she applied for her documents, she had to stand in the rain for hours.

"This facility no can longer cope with the amount of people in the Greater Tzaneen municipal area and something must be done about this urgently! It is unbelievable and completely unacceptable. You need to do better!" she said.

The Herald visited the office on Friday, February 25. People in the queue said that they started queuing from 03:00 in the hope of being the first to get assisted when the office opens at 08:00, but regardless of how early they arrive, they had to queue for long hours before being assisted.

"I always arrive very early with the hope that I can be in the first group of people to be assisted because I know how slow they are," said Ngaletsane Malabela, a disgruntled resident.

She said that you cannot really complain because if you do, you get chased out and not receive any assistance.

She said Friday was her second day of queueing as she had to return after she was

not assisted on the previous day, Thursday, February 24.

She added that in order to arrive early enough, she has to hire a car since public transport only starts at 06:00 which costs an additional sum of money which she cannot afford.

The Herald contacted the spokesperson for the department for comment a few weeks ago for comment on the allegations.

We were then referred to the office manager of the Home Affairs office in Tzaneen, but our numerous enquiries went unanswered.

An employee at Home Affairs told the Herald that the complaints are only allegations and there are no truth to them.

Chaos erupts in council after EFF refuses to recognise speaker

Tintswalo Shipalana

No one could have predicted the chaos which erupted at the fourth Greater Tzaneen Municipality council sitting on Thursday, February 24.

The meeting started well as the speaker of council, Sannie Tiva, led the proceedings according to the agenda.

Tensions rose after EFF councillors refused to acknowledge Tiva as the legitimate speaker of council. The EFF is the official opposition in council.

The EFF party leader in the municipality, Clifford Malatji, had sent a motion of no confidence against Tiva on Tuesday, February 22 to council.

At the meeting Tiva asked to be excused and requested, Noko Malatji, to proceed as acting speaker on her behalf in order to address the motion.

Malatji read out the motion to council. Their reasons were that the speaker ignores them when they raise concerns during council meetings. They accused her of only accommodating ANC members who are the majority party in council. They also accused her of being lazy.

The motion was seconded by Clement Ramathoga of the EFF.

Malatji then indicated that because the letter had already stipulated why they introduced the motion of no confidence against the recently elected speaker, they had two options.

Council could vote by a show of hands or by means of a secret ballot.

This didn't sit well with the EFF councillors who wanted to debate the matter.

They started to chant freedom songs and hitting tables causing disorder. The police were called to remove the EFF members from the council meeting.

The meeting then went ahead as planned.



Top: Police as they escort the EFF members out of the council meeting.
Above: The acting speaker during the council sitting, Noko Malatji.
Right: René Pohl of the DA addressing the meeting.

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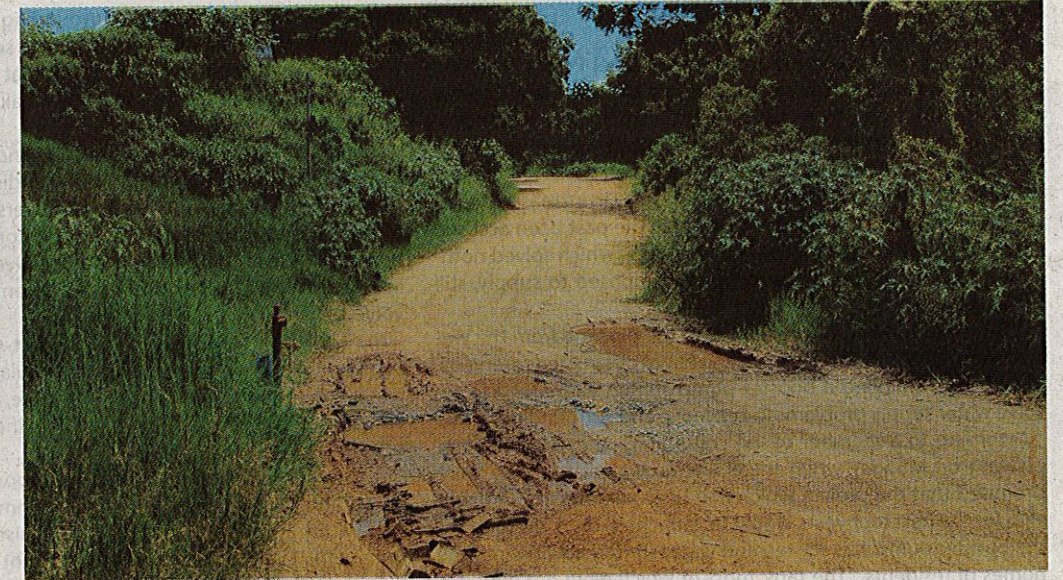
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Impala to be rehabilitated after 20 years



This is Impala Street in Tzaneen's industrial area. It is actually a tarred public access road in the heavy industrial area. We're not kidding.



These massive craters in the road's surface is caused by the private water tankers that illegally draw water from this fire hydrant.

■ **Joe Dreyer**

It has been years since Tzaneen's motorists were able to use Impala Street in Tzaneen's heavy industrial area in their daily commute. In fact even businesses in that area have not been able to use this road due to the Greater Tzaneen Municipality's typically lackadaisical approach to service delivery and basic maintenance.

Many reading this article would not have been aware that Impala Street actually exists, or where exactly it is situated as it has long since become a donga-riddled dirt road suitable only for heavy vehicles and large trucks. The latter even struggling to traverse this route successfully of late.

This led to a small motor vehicle accident involving two vehicles owned by neighbouring businesses situated along this route. Nobody was injured in the accident, but the tensions had reached boiling point

and both the business owners contacted their ward councillor, and their local newspaper to try and resolve the matter.

DA Ward Councillor Chrizelle Dreyer contacted the parties involved and arranged for a meeting between all affected businesses and the GTM to find a way forward. The meeting was held last week at the offices of Tzaneng Timbers and was attended by Riaan du Plessis and Loubelle van Dyk of Tzaneng Timbers, Mark Webb of Wisani Funeral Services, Hassim Goolam Mohamed of HGM Steelboys and a delegation from the GTM led by Olga Tshisevhe, GTM Manager: Roads and Storm Water.

According to Tshisevhe, the GTM is currently busy with the rehabilitation of the roads in Tzaneen and have prioritised them according to risk factors. "The short-term solution will be to re-gravel the road starting with the lower section of Impala Street which is in the worst condition. There are leaking storm water pipes and the water tankers

that collect water from the hydrant in front of Woodcloe at Impala Street 26 also contribute to the bad condition of the road."

Tzaneng Timbers have been occupying the premises in Impala Street since 2001 and own several other properties along the same stretch. In the past, du Plessis fixed this road and even paid to have three speed-bumps and various traffic signs erected. He even used the GTM's preferred contractor to do so. Because of this, it was initially believed that there existed an agreement between the municipality and Tzaneng Timbers that du Plessis would keep the road maintained. This was however proven to be a falsehood. Du Plessis did offer his assistance and even machinery to the municipality during the meeting held last week, which they gladly accepted.

The meeting concluded with the GTM committing to the complete rehabilitation of Impala Street which reportedly commenced on Monday the 28th of February with what they termed "short-term repairs".

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