

DA Gauteng Cabinet Scorecard: Only change will build a better Gauteng

In the past year, the failing ANC in Gauteng has been immersed in numerous scandals while the local municipalities which they govern have fallen into ill-repair.

Emfuleni, Merafong, West Rand District and Lesedi have become ungovernable with little to no consequence for those who have robbed residents of their constitutional right to quality service delivery.

Illegal investments with VBS bank, unfunded budgets, the non-payment of municipal staff and increasing debt with both Eskom and Rand Water have become the order of the day in failing ANC-run municipalities.

However, nothing less should be expected from an organisation that places 'party unity' ahead of the people and building One South Africa for All. Ultimately this is the choice that the people of Gauteng will have when they vote in next year's elections – party or country.

Brain Hlongwa, implicated in a Special Investigating Unit report into rampant corruption during his tenure as Gauteng Health MEC; Qedani Mahlangu – the architect of the Esidimeni tragedy which claimed 144 lives; and former Emfuleni Mayor, Simon "sex-pest" Mofokeng remain high ranking members of the failing ANC.

It is these individuals that will take decisions on how Gauteng should be run under the failing ANC. But the people of Gauteng have the power to usher in change that unites and builds a province of prosperity led by an honest and caring government.

In the municipalities where the DA-governs -- Johannesburg, Tshwane and Midvaal -- life is improving for residents through the decisive and people-centred approach the DA has toward service delivery.

In Johannesburg, large scale corruption, which was endemic under the failing ANC is being rooted out by Mayor Herman Mashaba. His administration has adopted a pro-poor budget, increased the number of Metro police on the beat and has begun rejuvenation projects to improve the lives of those who have been forgotten by the ANC.

In Tshwane, we have turned around a municipality that was on the brink of financial collapse brought about by ANC negligence. Illegal and over-priced contracts have been cancelled and the city's finances are now in a positive balance. The money that has been saved is already being ploughed back into speeding up service delivery functions to improve the lives of the city's residents.

DA-run Midvaal municipality continues to grow from strength to strength. Under Mayor Bongani Baloyi's leadership, Midvaal continues to remain the shining example of good governance that is the pronounced DA difference. Unqualified audits and governance awards attest to the good work that is being done; Midvaal's residents have one of the highest living standards in South Africa.

The DA's intention is to bring to the Gauteng Provincial Government in 2019 what it has successfully brought to the municipalities where we govern.

Under the failing ANC, change will not come to the people of Gauteng. There will be more empty promises and a continued decline in the state of governance.

The DA Cabinet Scorecard is an analysis based on the individual MEC's grasp of his/her portfolio demands, leadership skills, approachability, willingness to appear before oversight committees, and quality of written and oral responses to DA questions.

Premier David Makhura

Premier David Makhura has lost the charm he held when he was elected into office in 2014. He has proven himself to be a man of many words and very few actions.

Crime indaba's, infrastructure summits, and commissions of inquiry have all become the order of the day for Makhura – but results of all these endeavours are hard to come by as prosecutions and criminal charges remain few and far between.

Under his watch, the Life Esedimeni tragedy unfolded, needlessly claiming the lives of 144 mentally ill people. And, although he subjected himself to the arbitration hearings on the matter, he has never owned up to his complicity in the resultant loss of life.

In the last four years of his Premiership, ANC-run local municipalities have fallen into disrepair. He has failed the people who reside in these municipalities by not taking decisive action against errant Mayors who squander public funds.

The provision of service delivery in these places is at an all-time low. This underlines Premier Makhura's complete disregard for the well-being of this province's residents.

He has yet again used the contentious e-Toll system, which he has had four years to address with his counterparts in National Government, as a tactic to woo voters back to the failing ANC ahead of the 2019 elections. Our position on the extra tax is unchanged: e-Tolls must go!

Given the sentiment expressed by Finance Minister, Tito Mboweni in his mid-term budget speech, it is clear the failing ANC will not rid our freeways of this contentious tolling system.

To his credit, Premier Makhura runs his own office like a well-oiled machine.

Unfortunately, he does not have the ability to reign in members of his executive who do not treat their own departments with the same discipline.

As the captain of the Gauteng ship, Makhura has allowed the province to drift into choppy waters while taking his hands off the wheel.

His show boating has done little to arrest the uncontrollable rate of crime that is plaguing the province.

His talk-shops have not materially impacted the growing rate of unemployment, particularly amongst the youth who have become despondent and are turning to substance abuse as a means of escape.

A man of many promises, so few of which have been kept, Premier Makhura has left an uninspiring legacy which has amounted to very little change of fortune for Gauteng's 14 million residents.

Score: 4/10

Gwen Ramokgopa - Health

MEC Gwen Ramokgopa has not been equal to the challenge of rectifying the deep-rooted problems in this department and was slow to act over the deaths of nine babies from Necrotising Enterocolitis (NEC) at the Rahima Moosa Hospital and six babies who died of antibiotic resistant Klebsiella at the Thelle Mogoerane Hospital.

There was an attempted cover-up of these deaths and the MEC is culpable of protecting the CEO at Thelle Mogoerane Hospital for so long despite manifold complaints from staff and unions.

It is also inexcusable that a permanent CEO has not been appointed at the Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital since January 2016.

Ramokgopa should have resigned or been fired over the fire that broke out at her head office at the Bank of Lisbon building which cost the lives of three firemen. She ignored obvious signs of decay in this building and many warnings by unions, and even a demonstration by disgruntled workers.

She has also been remiss in not giving a higher priority to finding the 21 Esidimeni patients who are still missing.

Her general failure is illustrated by the Auditor-General's report for 2017/18 which rebukes the department for lack of controls, unreliable information, and racking up irregular expenditure of R1.7 billion and fruitless and wasteful expenditure of R38 million.

Ramokgopa has been a big disappointment as she lacks the drive and good judgement to do what is necessary to fix the manifold problems in Gauteng's health services.

The only reason Ramokgopa scores 1 instead of zero is because she is not former Health MEC Qedani Mahlangu who resigned in disgrace after the Life Esidimeni disaster.

Score 1/10

Sizakele Nkosi-Malobane – Community Safety

MEC Sizakele Nkosi-Malobane does not have an articulated vision for her department. In the year since our last review, the performance of her department has drastically deteriorated – especially that of the HOD who diminishes reporting to a box ticking exercise, rather than a useful reporting tool.

The Auditor-General has flagged this department for three years in a row due to a lack of compliance with the annual performance plan and key performance indicators which has negatively impacted on service delivery outcomes.

To avoid the need for competitive bidding on goods and services, R3.5 million worth of procurement deals were broken into contracts below R500 000.00. This is an irregular practice that we are monitoring very closely.

The department also writes off debt without trying to recover funds first.

Under the MEC's watch, crime rates have escalated in the province as departmental plans are not focused on crime prevention.

The department repeatedly ignores its' constitutional mandate of police oversight which has taken a toll on police/community relations.

A crucial programme of the department, Civilian Oversight, continues to be neglected with budget rarely, if ever spent.

The MEC is arrogant and dismissive. She has failed in her duties and should not oversee such a crucial portfolio.

Score: 2/10

Barbara Creecy – Finance

Gauteng Finance MEC, Barbara Creecy's performance as the MEC responsible for public funds has deteriorated in the past year.

Her lax attitude toward the illegal investment of millions of rand of now irrecoverable public funds shows that she holds little clout within her organisation. In fact, right up until the damage had been done by errant ANC officials in these municipalities, she claimed she had no responsibility to hold officials to account.

There remains little consequence for those who waste public funds and abuse the system to the detriment of the residents of Gauteng.

Despite presiding over a crucial department in government, senior positions – particularly those needed for cyber security and big data analysis, remain vacant.

Of considerable concern is that this department experiences a 40% sick rate amongst employees. The DA has requested that this be probed as a department such as this should not experience such a high absenteeism rate. This is indicative of low morale and poor internal controls.

Asset verification is a challenge for the department which are currently being probed by the Auditor-General for not complying with legislation.

MEC Creecy often passes the buck on issues raised by the DA to the HOD or CFO. This again points to weak leadership by the MEC.

The MEC's off-handed approach as the political head of this department is indicative of the style of governance shown by the ANC. Stronger leadership is required in this department if Gauteng is to thrive.

Score 4/10

Nandi Mayathula-Khoza – Social Development

MEC Nandi Mayathula-Khoza does not like to subject herself to scrutiny. She frequently dodges portfolio committee meetings, instead sending officials to answer on her behalf.

Under her watch, illegal conduit payments were out of control – which only stopped when the A Re Ageng scandal broke.

She has had to be repeatedly reminded of her constitutional mandate by National Treasury which has found the department to have habitually violated legislation and the constitution.

When questioned on late payments to NGOs and the work being done to assist cooperatives, she is wilfully defiant.

The MEC has no articulated vision for her department. She vacillates and allows things to happen without any clear leadership.

NGOs were not paid on time in quarter 1 of this financial year and she used the social worker strike as an excuse. In quarter's 2, 3 and 4 there were still late payments to some NGOs. Her poor leadership style and her uncaring attitude has led to the closure of some NGOs with many others on the brink of closure.

In the DA-led Western Cape, the provincial government makes use of dashboards to monitor performance and pick up on any irregular activities. In Gauteng, there is no monitoring system.

As the department tasked with looking after the most vulnerable members of our society, MEC Mayathula-Khoza is not fit for the requirements of the job.

Score: 2/10

Ismail Vadi – Roads and Transport

MEC Ismail Vadi's department has regressed in its management of contracts and the delivery of new roads. The department's procurement processes have delayed many important contracts and have caused a loss in budget for the construction of new roads.

Incomplete projects, like the William Nicol extension, plague the department which has finally ended this contract with the contractor after the road construction was stalled for over 18 months.

There are also allegations of impropriety against the Head of Department related to this project. It took MEC Vadi a long time before he started an investigation into irregular payments and to date, despite the deadline for the report having passed, he has not indicated the result of the investigation nor the action to be taken.

Transport planning is lagging in the province and the implementation of the promised single ticketing system is also not coming to fruition.

Then department under MEC Vadi lacks proper management of procurement and contracts and is exceptionally slow in dealing with irregularities.

Score: 5/10

Faith Mazibuko -Sports, Recreation, Arts and Culture

The MEC lacks vision for the department as she has failed to ensure that the department delivers when it comes to programmes that will have a lasting impact on grassroots development of sports. Her negligent attitude has seen the department only spend 86.8% of the allocated budget which falls outside the Treasury regulations of 5% under/over expenditure.

Under the leadership of MEC Mazibuko, findings of the Auditor-General revealed non-compliance with regulations which has led to the department incurring irregular expenditure to the value of R72 319 000.00

The quality of the MEC's written replies to questions is poor and her oral replies are equally poor as she is always evasive when replying. She always displays the "I don't care what the opposition says" attitude when responding to oral replies and her statements always have racist undertones.

The department under her leadership has failed to meet all its set targets, particularly in rolling out much needed infrastructure projects.

Those infrastructure projects that do get off the ground always exceed budget and take years to complete.

She has failed in terms of holding officials accountable both operationally and ethically. A case in point is the CEO of the Gauteng Film Commission who was on suspension for over a year without being formally charged whilst continuing to enjoy the full benefits associated with his position.

Score: 3/10

Lebogang Maile – Economic Development

MEC Lebogang Maile is rude and arrogant and treats a lot of the department's staff with contempt.

Instead of focusing on the core mandate of his department – economic growth, he spends large amounts of the departmental budget on advertising his own face on billboards around the province.

There is little evidence of the department playing any role in facilitating sustainable economic opportunities as is evidenced by the growing rate of unemployment and the shrinking economy in the province.

The MEC answers questions quite promptly but often does so with a "I don't care attitude". His appearance in the House has been average but he spends most of his time there loudly passing snide remarks.

The department is over-staffed and many of the top officials overpaid. The entities just exist as a patronage network. The Gauteng Enterprise Propeller and Gauteng Growth and Development Agency could easily be merged into one and operate like WESGRO, which has made a significant impact on economic stimulation in the DA-run Western Cape.

GEP has had an acting CEO for more than four years, whom it is alleged treats the entity as her own fiefdom. There are ongoing staff issues with accusations of intimidation and a high rate of dismissals.

The current merger of the Gauteng Liquor Board and the Gambling Board is a step in the right direction however the lack of political will by the MEC is drawing out the process longer than it should.

Under MEC Maile, little has been done to create an environment for growth and employment and he should not return as the MEC for this portfolio.

Score: 3/10

Jacob Mamabolo – Infrastructure Development

From the time that the Department of Infrastructure Development (DID) broke away from the Department of Public Transport, Roads and Works in 2009, it has, under the political leadership of many MECs, performed extremely poorly.

MEC Jacob Mamabolo was redeployed to DID at the beginning of 2016. He asked for leeway to evaluate the department and then to intervene to improve its performance.

His evaluation was candid and brutal when he pointed out that the department suffered from a lack of leadership and was dysfunctional in many areas, including poor project management and that the department is not in control of the R30 billion worth of immovable assets of which it is the custodian.

Initially his interventions bore some fruit, but it was not sustainable and his performance once again regressed. Statistically the department's performance is worse now than it has ever been.

In dealing with his failure, the MEC spends an inordinate amount of time and money applying public relations, white-washing and tap-dancing. What he does not seem to understand is that the application of lip-stick to a pig does not change the nature of the pig.

This portfolio has the capacity to grow the economy of Gauteng if only it performed.

The MEC has failed to live up to his promises, which supports the contention that no matter who the leader, the ANC cannot perform because of its policies and the cadres it deploys.

Score: 4/10

Panyaza Lesufi – Education

MEC Panyaza Lesufi has once again endeared himself as the top performer in the Provincial Government.

He has a clear vision of where his department is headed and has made a tremendous effort to modernize education in Gauteng, as well as to ensure that learners receive quality education.

His vision for schools of specialization is a step in the right direction. As is his department's partnerships with the private sector.

A welcome move has been the focus on Maths, Science & ICT, Engineering, Commerce & Entrepreneurship, Sports and Creative & Performing Arts.

School twinning programmes, where schools share resources, has consolidated leadership and governance.

The online admission process where parents no longer take a day off from work to go to school to enrol their children for Grades 1 and 8 has improved.

The province attained a matric pass rate of 85.1% and eight districts were amongst the best top ten performing districts in the country.

While the department received an unqualified audit, and spent 99.4% of its budget, it has failed to adhere to supply chain management regulations which has resulted in almost R100 million worth of irregular expenditure.

There are numerous reports of corruption at a school level where SGBs are involved, yet this is a problem that seems to evade the MEC.

The MEC hasn't covered up wrong doing by officials but has been soft on the consequences for officials who failed to do their work.

Score 7.5/10

Uhuru Moiloa – Human Settlements, Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs

MEC Uhuru Moiloa has failed to express either verbally or in writing any vision or direction for his department.

He appears to have bought into and accepted previously failed initiatives such as the proposed MEGA project programme, the formalization of informal settlements and the stalled Premier's Land Parcel Programme.

The limited input he has articulated is vague and confusing and provides little direction as to his planned intended outcomes.

He appears to be completely overwhelmed with the complexities of his task and totally out of his depth when attempting to formulate or drive any programmes.

The MEC's conduct in office began with a positive and consultative approach. His attitude quickly changed to bewilderment and aloofness and has progressed to being evasive, uncertain and frustrated with the poor performance within his department.

He offers no effective or measurable solutions to the problem.

His interaction with the COGTA and Human Settlements Committee is superficial and his speeches in the House attempt to obfuscate the issues and provide justification for failures within the department.

The magnitude of the task before him is clearly way beyond his capabilities.

The department of COGTA and Human Settlements with its current political and operational leadership is in perpetual decline. The placing of Emfuleni Municipality under administration is indicative of how poorly the department has functioned.

The dispatching of troops to attempt to solve the sewerage crisis is indicative of a department out of touch with reality. All of this is reflective of a department that is under-capacitated and lacking in leadership and accountability

The quarterly and yearly reports reflect major underspending in the department, a lack of direction in policy implementation and general inactivity in delivery programmes.

The MEC has indicated on a few occasions that change is envisaged in the department, but no plan or an implementation strategy has been forthcoming.

The department is in disarray and terminally non-productive. No officials are held to account despite repeated ongoing incompetence.

The MEC seems confused and disconnected from the department. Although he took over an already dysfunctional department he has stood idly by as it has swiftly deteriorated.

Score: 1/10

Conclusion:

The ANC does not have what it takes to transform Gauteng into a province of safety, quality service delivery and economic prosperity, because they only care about themselves, not the people.

The power to bring change lies in the hands of the people of this province. As the DA, we are working to bring change that opens access to real, long-term jobs, secures our borders, creates an honest and professional police service and speeds up the delivery of quality services.