

Your ref:

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Date: 11 April 2020

e-Mail: nbhanga@gmail.com

Who deals with this: Nqaba Bhanga

**ACTING EXECUTIVE MAYOR  
NELSON MANDELA BAY MUNICIPALITY  
CLLR T BUYEYE**

**PER EMAIL****URGENT CORRESPONDENCE**

Dear Cllr Buyeye,

**RE: COVID-19 LOCKDOWN / PHYSICAL DISTANCING FOR MUNICIPAL MEETINGS AND GATHERINGS**

You are well aware of the fact that Nelson Mandela Bay is the epicentre of the COVID-19 virus in the Eastern Cape. As the world, the country and our city, we are traversing very uncertain times in fighting this global pandemic.

The city has correctly and in terms of gazetted Disaster Management Act regulations established a Disaster Management Advisory Forum: COVID-19. The said forum is the central coordinating body for Nelson Mandela Bay in responding to the national disaster, which you will agree, is an unprecedented event.

In the first two weeks, we have noted there are meetings taking place at the JOC and other municipal meetings where physical distancing is not being practised. Further, noting that Councillors and officials frequent the JOC when returning from communities within the city, potentially risking the integrity of the JOC and the operations being directed from there.

The abovementioned prompted me to raise our concern regarding the physical distancing aspect at the JOC and other municipal meetings. By not practising physical distancing, our city's response is being compromised, which we believe, can be avoided. Key officials must be allowed to conduct their work without being concerned about facing possible exposure to the virus at the very place where the battle against the virus is being waged. There are simply no reasons for non-COVID-19 municipal meetings or gatherings to take place.

We urge your office to immediately issue directives to safeguard the physical integrity of the JOC by adhering to real physical distancing measures and further tighten up entry into the JOC and the building. Furthermore, introduce without delay, a video conferencing platform to enable officials to join meetings electronically to enhance physical distancing measures where meetings of the municipality must take place. This approach is being adopted widely by governments throughout South Africa and

**PR COUNCILLOR**

the world. Let us not add to the uncertainty we face by convening face to face meetings where the same is not necessary.

Finally, we would like to convey our sincere appreciation to all the city's essential workers who are working tirelessly to keep the city running and fighting the spread of this virus.

Sincerely,



**CLLR N BHANGA (DA)**

Copy: Acting City Manager  
Ms N Nqwazi

Chief Operating Officer  
Mr M George

Executive Director: Safety & Security  
Mr K Meyer

Director: Disaster Management  
Mr S Brown