

28/12/2025



OPEN LETTER

To: Councillor Samantha Windvogel (Ward 65 Councillor, eThekweni Municipality)

Date: 28 December 2025

Subject: Water and Electricity Infrastructure Failures — Accountability, Corrective Action, and a Formal Communication Mechanism

Councillor Samantha Magdalene Windvogel,

We write as residents and ratepayers who recognise the demands of public office and acknowledge the work you do under difficult conditions. This letter is not personal. It is a formal request for clarity, accountability, and a proactive plan in relation to the recurring collapse of basic services in our area—specifically water and electricity supply.

While emergency callouts and short-term repairs may restore service temporarily, they are not resolving the underlying infrastructure crisis. The result is a predictable cycle of failure, rework, and prolonged disruption—at significant cost to households, safety, local businesses, and the dignity of residents.

South Africa's constitutional and local government framework is explicit: local government must provide services sustainably and accountably, and public administration must be responsive, transparent, and accountable.

1) Proactive action at Council level: what is being done to stop the cycle?

We request a written response setting out what you are doing—proactively and formally—at Council level to escalate and drive durable solutions for failing water and electricity infrastructure, including (at minimum):

- What service-delivery interventions you are advancing through Council processes to address recurring outages and infrastructure degradation (not only response, but prevention).
- What engagements you have initiated with the relevant municipal departments and political structures, and what commitments (if any) have been secured.
- What timelines and measurable outcomes you are pursuing.



The Constitution places an obligation on municipalities to ensure sustainable service provision and to give priority to basic needs. The Municipal Systems Act reinforces this duty by requiring that municipalities give priority to the basic needs of communities and ensure access to at least a minimum level of basic municipal services. ([South Africa Government](#))

2) Holding eThekweni accountable for poor workmanship and repeat failures

As our elected representative, we ask how you are holding eThekweni Municipality accountable for:

- Repeat failures and “rework” that suggests work was not done correctly the first time; and
- The ongoing lack of consequences, lessons learned, and documented improvement.

Public administration must be accountable and transparent and must respond to people’s needs. ([Justice](#))

Eric Road electricity failure: preventing recurrence

Regarding the electricity failure in Eric Road, we require you to outline what mechanisms you will implement (or demand) to ensure this does not happen again, including:

- A formal root-cause analysis (what failed, why it failed, and what should have prevented it);
- A corrective action plan (what will be changed in maintenance, components, operating procedures, contractor oversight, and escalation protocols); and
- A prevention and monitoring plan, with named responsible parties and realistic timelines.

3) Formal mechanism for complaints, feedback, and response times

A recurring and serious grievance is the lack of feedback to residents. We require a clear, formal mechanism that the community can rely on.



The Municipal Systems Act provides that residents have the right to submit complaints to Council/political office bearers/administration and to prompt responses; and it also requires communication and accurate information about service levels. ([South Africa Government](#)) It further requires municipalities to provide for the receipt, processing and consideration of petitions and complaints. ([South Africa Government](#))

Accordingly, please provide in writing:

- The official channel for complaints and escalation (WhatsApp, email, phone call, municipal reference number process—what is *official* and what is *informal*).
- Expected response times for: (a) acknowledgement, (b) status updates, and (c) resolution or next steps.
- A single accountable point of contact when you are unavailable (with name, role, and authority)—so residents are not left without recourse during emergencies or prolonged outages.

4) Accountability is not optional—and neither is dignity

We should not have to plead for basic services. Residents are entitled to lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair administrative action, and to written reasons where rights are adversely affected. The right of access to sufficient water is explicitly protected, and the state must take reasonable measures to progressively realise that right.

We raise this because the lived reality is that service failures are now affecting quality of life, safety, health, and economic stability. The era of unaccountability is over—not as a slogan, but because these failures have become untenable.

We must also say this plainly: many residents feel our issues are not prioritised. Whether this perception is fair or not, it is real—and it is worsened by poor feedback loops and the absence of visible, preventative action.

5) If we are using the wrong channels, direct us—formally

If the correct mechanism is not through your office, then please direct us to the relevant department and formal process (with the exact steps and contact



details). We will engage the relevant parties directly, but we require a written pathway that is clear and enforceable.

6) Deadline and escalation

We require a **formal written response by 6 January 2026**.

If we do not receive a formal response by that date, we will escalate this matter through the appropriate political and governance structures, including the caucus leadership, proportional representation channels, and other oversight mechanisms available to residents, not withstanding our Constitutional representative in the National Assembly.

Please also note: these concerns will be shared with **every candidate (all parties)** standing for election in our ward, as they relate directly to governance, service delivery performance, and accountability.

7) Collaboration: we are willing to work with you

We are prepared to work hand-in-hand with your office to support structured reporting, fault logging discipline, evidence collection, and community coordination—provided there is a transparent system, clear accountability, and consistent feedback.

Councillor, we thank you for your service. This letter is written in the spirit of support—with firmness—because the situation demands more than short-term fixes. We need a plan, and we need reliable governance mechanisms that restore trust and deliver results.

OPEN LETTER TO COUNCILLOR
WARD 65, ETHEKWINI
28/12/2025



*Community
Admins*

Yours faithfully,

Concerned Residents and Ratepayers (Ward 65, eThekweni Municipality)

(On behalf of affected households and businesses in the area)

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