



OPEN-LETTER-COUNCILLOR-WARD 65-28122025.pdf

Sun, Feb 1, 2026 at 10:21 AM

Hi Mr Naidoo,

Thank you for the detailed response. We appreciate you taking the time to address our concerns. Please see my responses in Blue.

On Sat, Jan 31, 2026 at 11:00 PM Livien Naidoo wrote:

Dear Councillor and Wayne Erradu,

Kindly note that in response to your request below, the Energy Management teams have undertaken an investigation into the Electricity complaints received and have determined the following:

Electricity

1. **Compliant - A feasibility study to replace old cables with new ones, everytime a cable fault is detected it is fixed, however the average time to fix is 2-4 days where we are without power. Business in the area as well as residents working from home are affected, loss of food and supplies are regular. It's becoming untenable to live in this area with these challenges, with active rate - paying citizens now wanting to leave the area.**

Response - An analysis of the fault reports in the area have identified MV cable faults as the primary reason for the outages experienced by the area. Replacement of old cables with new cables is not a solution to the problem as cables are often damaged by third party service providers, and the results of the damage are seen after long after the construction has been completed. Our Maintenance teams have been tasked to review the cable network in the area and attend to any outstanding repairs that maybe required to be undertaken as a means of improving the quality of service received by the community.

Instead of asking why this hasnt been done already, we ask that we be kept abreast of these investigations. I agree with you that the MV cable faults are the issue. When there is an MV fault, it eviscerates local electricity cabling within our community leading to costly repairs of laying cable within our roads. The last one being early January when approximately 100m of cable needed to be replaced between Bellair SAPS and Eric Avenue. Since everything works with a Fault number I want to give you the reality on the ground.

1. Instead of isolating the sub area when a fault is found, Electricians switch of the entire. So this increases our frustration as for one fault the entire area is switched of rather than isolated. I understand safety however its laziness that that the entire area has to suffer. This needs to be addressed
2. We have looked inside the switching stations, they are not secured, almost every dss or transformer in our area is not locked, this leaves a gap for criminal elements to get in there and steal the citys equipment, can the maintenance team secure this infrastructure it would greatly reduce the MV faults
3. There is little to no coordination between Electricity and Parks and Recreation, and example the Sub station on Eric Road has trees and water running in it, Why cant an internal fault be raised for the surrounding area to be cleaned so that your infrastructure is not overgrown. Ive seen the conditions in which your Teams work. Its extreme and they have to first fight bushes and trees to get to the infrastructure.

4. I would not place the blame on only sub contractors we are aware of budget allocations and aging infrastructure. Our Main Sub station in our area has been in existence since 1956, the cabling that does give way is due to these cables reaching the end of life. How can we table a motion for budget to overhaul the existing 1956 Sub Station?
5. Its not all bad, we find that insourced Ethekewini Electrical Engineers/Faultsman etc are absolutely professional, courteous and kind. They are a pleasure to work with. Sub contractors are also professional but they lack the right tools, example a flashlight, when the job is done, there is no Quality control whereby Ethekewini checks that it was done correctly. Shouldnt supervisors sign off before closing the fault? Example January 2026 the subcontractors were using phone torches to join and repair a cable at night. Is there no toolbox check and quality check?
6. There are Multiple MV Faults in our area, if someone can sit down look at them and own it, they would see the big picture instead of having different teams fixing it for the sake of fixing it. Again I think its not looking at the big picture and saying if we do X, y and z will not happen. So part of the above maybe 1 hour of planning can save all of us alot of frustration and cost.

2. **Compliant - There has been copper theft in our area, we ask Ethekewini to remove old copper and replace with Aluminium Clad cabling. Every time a cable is stolen it affects your switching infrastructure. A case in point a DSS in Angle Road was tampered with. We logged it with the Municipality 2 days prior, on day 3, components were stolen costing the municipality approximately a million to replace for something that will only get a few hundred rands on the illegal market.**

Response – Theft and vandalism is a major cause of failures on the network and affects the quality of service received by customers. The eThekewini Electricity network is vast and the impacts of theft and vandalism is far reaching, the Directorate is committed to undertaking network improvement projects however, due to the size of the electrical network and the network replacements required to be undertaken merely as a mitigation measure against theft, it is not able to do so, due to budget allocations. The Directorate has therefore opted to improve electrical network performance by replacing stolen copper conductor with aerial bundled conductor where technically possible to do so.

1. Addressed above with the securing/ locking of your infrastructure.
2. Most copper is stolen because there are no streetlamps and its free for all to criminals not only for electrical infrastructure but to crime in general in our area
3. If budget constraints are the issue, then lets start with the basics common sense actionable items. Lock your infrastructure.
4. We can understand that when copper is stolen, it will be replaced by overhead aerial bundle. We accept that. As it is based on costs.
5. The turnaround times for it to be replaced is days, recently we had an outage in Norton avenue for a fuse being blown it took 2 days for someone to repair and that was because Cllr Samantha kept pushing.

3. **Compliant - The quality of workmanship is poor, we have 2 current issues that are still open. A copper cable was stolen in Leach road (7803802), Subcontractors insulated the cable above ground and left it, we have reported that the closest home owner has reported since then everytime he touches his gate to open it he is shocked. Nothing has been done. A second light pole Copper was stolen in Norton Avenue (78311148), we logged the fault. If you look at the workmanship there is joiners used again above ground that can easily be removed. No insulation tape was used and it is left like that. Please understand we have children in our neighbourhood, they are curious and this is an accident waiting to happen because of shoddy work. Pictures can be provided. Again, no effort to resolve this safely and the streetlights still dont work. This is a liability for the munipality should someone die.**

Response – Theft and vandalism infrastructure once again remains the cause of the outages experienced by the community. The workmanship issue has been investigated, and the teams have been advised to make safe as well as restore the network functionality.

1. This is failure in Quality Management,as I see it, Sub contractors do not carry stock on hand, they therefore make a quick plan to do the least. Shouldnt Ethekewini Check the work or pictures be sent to Supervisors to check the quality of work before signing off and paying Sub Contractors?
2. On the above 2 they are still outstanding, so there will be rework and costs to the municipality, I have sent pictures in previous communications and happy to send again to show you it definitely does not follow the philosophy of make safe
3. Both Street lights are still not working because its been closed on the system and each time we open up a fault for it to be repaired, whoever assigns the fault, closes our case as they look at the history and say it was repaired when it isnt. The Gentleman in leach road and his family get shocked everyday when they touch their gate to open and drive out. Thats almost 3 months of us complaining? Would anyone here accept that if it was their family?

4. Compliant - We don't have streetlights, Michael Road, Middleton Crescent don't have any streetlights. This has been the case for 5 years. We keep logging calls nothing happens. Driving around our neighbourhood there are multiple street lamps not working. We log it, nothing happens. This has seen an increase in crime in our area, with in 2025 a loss of life because our area is so dark. We deserve to live in a lit-up space with safety in mind.

Response – These issue above has been raised for resolve with the Energy Managements Streetlighting department and shall be actioned accordingly.

1. It needs to be raised faster, we have over 31 streetlights not working, each time we log it sits idle and when we follow up a new fault is raised. It must be because faults are measured in age of faults. So the Cycle starts again when a new fault is raised, and we rinse and repeat.

In Conclusion, there is a reality on the ground vs what is filtered to the top. If you really want to fix the system and deliver services, read this again and see where the flaws are and mitigate them. If this is our experience then it must be across the eThekwini. As chief Engineer Mr Naidoo the technical aspects as well as the fault system reporting, quality control and allocation of resources needs to be looked at. If you close the gap not only will this save the city but citizens who call eThekwini home will see the shift and difference in service delivery.

Mr/Mrs Luntu we await your promised findings on our request to relace the asbestos in Limber and Rocky Ridge Roads, yet again in January Limber road blew and I would say probably 50% is PVC is Limber and 30% is PVC in limber. Its going to keep bursting adding to our frustration of not having consistent services. Your response dated 12/01/2026. As Senior Manager Construction Planning and Works we ask that this be expedited through your office. A shout out to Nolwazi from your department she is always trying her best to assist us.

I hope you now have insight into what the reality is, we affirm our committment to work with eThekwini and Councillor Samantha but we need more implementation than emails.

REDACTED TO PROTECT PRIVACY