



a world class African city

City of Johannesburg
Group Communication and Marketing Department

11th Floor A Block
Metropolitan Centre
158 Civic Boulevard
Braamfontein

PO Box 1049
Johannesburg
South Africa
2000

Tel +27(0) 11 407 7354

www.joburg.org.za

MEDIA RELEASE

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City of Johannesburg Focuses on Strengthening Ethical Leadership

The City of Johannesburg held an educational awareness workshop on ethical leadership in Braampark, Johannesburg, on Friday 30 August 2024.

The workshop facilitated by Mr Mlandu Kona, Group Head of Governance, was attended by the city's Head of Departments, Managing Directors and Chief Executive Officers of the Municipal Entities. Presentations were made by Mr Sagren Reddy Provincial Head of the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) in Gauteng, Advocate Lelethu Jobela-Ramahlaha from the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) Specialised Crimes Unit, Mrs Priscilla Brown from Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA), Integrity Fraud and Corruption Department, Hawks, SALGA

Ethical leadership is foundational to good governance as it promotes practices that are fair, transparent, and accountable, ultimately leading to sustainable and responsible management of organisations and institutions.

Over the years, the City of Johannesburg has strived to instill and maintain a high standard of ethical leadership within the executive and administration through integrity, trust, accountability, transparency and engagement as servants of the various publics whose interests must be served advanced and protected.

Johannesburg has not been immune from allegations of fraud and corruption with allegations against councillors and officials surfacing from time to time.

Ethical leadership and related efforts have a direct bearing on receiving and maintaining clean audit reports which in turn generate investor confidence and public trust. The recent report by Auditor-General Tsakani Maluleke showed that many municipalities were unable to achieve clean audit reports because of a lack of strict implementation of measures and weak leadership. Noting that irregular and wasteful expenditure does not constitute corruption.

“Corruption has become institutional, structural and systematic in government,” according to Elphas Ndou from CoGTA. Research done from 2016 onwards conclusively indicate that this is the case.

Ndou emphasised that the Local Government Anti-Corruption Strategic Objectives has three key principles: promoting community ownership, strengthening municipalities’ resilience against corruption and building trust and accountability through effective investigation and resolution.

Overall, the strategy aims to prevent corruption before it starts through compliance, preemployment screening, lifestyle audits of councillors and officials coupled to detection through audits, using technology, cooperation with law agencies for proper investigations to take place.

Ndou said that a code is being developed for ethical leadership as a tool for leaders to assist leaders in creating clean governance. There appears not to be an appreciation amongst local government officials of the impact of fraud and corruption on service delivery. It deprives communities of much needed basic services from toilets, libraries, roads, medication amongst others due to direct or indirect collusion with colleagues, contractors and service providers.

Reddy said: “We offer free forensic data analysis, accounting, investigate information provided by whistleblowers with the intention of recovering money and assets and referrals for prosecutions.”

He added that the vulnerable sectors are local government, construction, health. The SIU has been involved in Joburg since January 2023 in regarding 27 whistleblower reports although 20 were closed due to lack of sufficient evidence. He said these were on “procurement irregularities, financial mismanagement and abuse of power” but bemoaned the lack of cooperation from the city.

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Issued by Virgil James

Communications Specialist

City of Joburg