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Unshackling the chains of homelessness in the City of Tshwane: A critical appraisal of the current policy in the light of national and local policies and strategies

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ABSTRACT

This article provides a critical appraisal of the current Homelessness Policy for the City of Tshwane in the light of national and local policies and strategies. Both a literature review and policy analysis were conducted to attain the main aim of this article. Documents consulted and used in this process included the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the Freedom Charter, the National Development Plan 2030 and the Tshwane Vision 2055. The study was prompted by the need to find a lasting solution towards the challenge of homelessness in the City of Tshwane through governmental and non-governmental interventions. Recommendations for the appraisal of the current policy document will be directed to the City Council which is empowered by the provision of the Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000, Section 11(3) to revise the current policy document.

KEYWORDS

Homeless; city; Tshwane; policy; strategy

1. Introduction

As long as many of our people still live in utter poverty, as long as children still live under plastic covers, as long as many of our people are still without jobs, no South African should rest and wallow in the joy of freedom. (Nelson Mandela)

South Africa will not be free until homeless people find their own homes. While the vision of the City of Tshwane is to create a home for all who live in it, the numbers of homeless people are on the rise. They have increased from just more than 2000 in 2010 (Du Toit, 2010:6) to just more than 5000 in 2014 (Van Zuydam, 2014b). These are people found ‘in front of government buildings, business stores and offices, dilapidated buildings in the city, shelters, streams and nearby bushes, and many informal settlements in the city which are their own inventions’ (Mashau, 2014:196). The homeless in the City of Tshwane can be categorised into three groups, namely: detached homeless persons, temporary overnight sleepers (including evictees and ‘weekday’ homeless persons), and informal settlement dwellers (Du Toit, 2010:3). This article focuses mainly on the first two categories that can be broadly referred to as ‘street homeless persons’. Reasons for homelessness are diverse and complex (Mashau,

2014:197). Examples that can be cited include, among others, landlessness (Mashau, 2014:196–7), poverty (Mangayi, 2014:214), economic injustice (Methula, 2014:109) and migration (Du Toit, 2010:2).

The foregoing is an indication that South Africa remains one of the most unequal societies in the world (Zulu, 2013:143). In their article, May & Meth (2007) explain how the unholy alliance of unemployment, poverty and inequality continues to ravage our democratic society. Social exclusion is still very much prevalent in our communities, and homelessness is probably the most undesirable result of this phenomenon. No wonder De Beer (2008:185) concluded that urban spaces (like the City of Tshwane) serve as a mirror of the increased social exclusion of others. In their publication, Mashau & Kritzing (2014) unmask the reality of social exclusion in the context of homelessness in the City of Tshwane. It is therefore critical to attend to this anomaly in the City of Tshwane because '[i]nequalities are detrimental to social cohesion' (Tshwane Vision 2055, 2013) and an impediment to the realisation of the vision to make the City of Tshwane home for all who live in it as captured in the Tshwane Vision 2055 document.

Like Nelson Mandela, we also believe that the eradication of homelessness forms part of our democratic responsibility. Addressing homelessness in the City of Tshwane forms part of this responsibility. A number of scholars have reflected on this responsibility (see Du Toit, 2010; Mangayi, 2014; Mashau, 2014; Ngcobo, 2014). In their reflection, these authors appreciate efforts by business, non-governmental organisations and faith-based organisations in addressing homelessness but agree with Hervé (2009) that the major responsibility when coming to implementation lies with the government. Thus, approaches to eradicating homelessness must encompass the vision for 'healthy and interconnected communities that will display characteristics of resilience, self-reliance and fair access to basic resources for sustainable livelihoods' (De Beer 2012:265).

The issue of homelessness is receiving serious attention. Du Toit (2010) provides a detailed report on how the City Council responded to this challenge. As part of the Tshwane Vision 2055 strategy, the City Council adopted the Homelessness Policy document of 2011. Following further consultations this document was revised and adopted in 2013, but it also proved to be inadequate in the area of providing a costed strategy. In the interest of finding an acceptable and durable policy to address homelessness, the Executive Mayor of Tshwane used the legislative provision of the Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000, Section 11(3), to bring together different perspectives to review the current policy. In this way the research and knowledge-building capacity of higher education institutions in the city was sought. Consequently, the City of Tshwane together with University of Pretoria and University of South Africa agreed to address the issue of homelessness in innovative and meaningful ways. This collaborative journey began in December 2014. The aim of this article, therefore, is to examine the process of enacting a suitable policy to address homelessness in the City of Tshwane; implementation which will take a multi-sectoral approach with the government as the main driver. The current policy is critically evaluated by looking at local and national policies and strategies aimed at eradicating homelessness. This article is structured as follows: the introduction; evaluating the current policy and delimitation of the study; finding a home (with the intention of defining a home within the current policy document on homelessness in the City of Tshwane); eradicating homelessness; and the conclusion.

2. Evaluating current policy and delimitation of the study

When talking about the current Homelessness Policy for the City of Tshwane, reference is made to the document that was adopted by the City Council on 8 April 2013. Collaborative research to address deficiencies in the current Homelessness Policy for the City of Tshwane and lack of cost strategy thereof was undertaken by University of Pretoria, University of South Africa, the City of Tshwane and the Tshwane Homelessness Forum. This article is therefore part of the bigger project entitled 'Pathways Out of Homelessness in the City of Tshwane'. The broader research methodology adopted is based on mixed research methods, including literature studies, critical policy analysis, focus groups, ethnographic interviews, unstructured interviews, case studies, critical spatial analysis, contextual Bible studies, open-source technology and geographical mapping (Pathways out of Homelessness: Research Report, 2015:13). This article, in particular, uses a combination of a literature review and policy analysis in the light of national and local policies and strategies on homelessness. Coming from a theological background, informed by my participation in the Meal of Peace Community Engagement Project of University of South Africa and having embraced the missiological framework that seeks to define missiology as encounterology (Kritzinger, 2008), I have tapped into theological articles and those from sociology. Policy documents in the context of South Africa and the City of Tshwane in particular were consulted and used.

Documents consulted and used in this process included the Freedom Charter, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the National Development Plan 2030 and Tshwane Vision 2055. It is critical to look at these documents because local policies and strategies are informed by the national agenda and therefore it is important to align the Tshwane Homelessness Policy with these documents. The Freedom Charter addresses the apartheid narrative and the vision embraced by the oppressed masses with regards to creating a South Africa which is a home for all. The vision of a non-racial society which is a home for all who live in it is entrenched in the Constitution of the country. The National Development Plan maps out the vision of the country moving forward. Tshwane Vision 2055 maps a way forwards in terms of creating this city as a home for all and therefore it is also critical to reflect on it as we appraise the current policy.

3. Finding a home

This section provides a critical analysis of the current Homelessness Policy in the City of Tshwane. Comments are made on different parts of this policy in the order in which they appear. This is done from a premise that seeks to find a home for all who live in the City of Tshwane, the homeless people in particular. Efforts to address homelessness in the City of Tshwane can be equated to a life-changing journey to find a home for the homeless. Sacks (2007) defines efforts to create a society as a home for all as a social responsibility of every member of that society. In the efforts to recreate Tshwane to become a home for all who live in it, it is important to critique the current policy by identifying both the strong points and weaknesses of the current policy; this will be done by looking closely at all its sections independently.

The glossary of the current policy identifies and defines various concepts used in the policy itself. While efforts were made to define homeless(ness), a definition of a home

is missing. A definition of a home, if provided, will help in terms of shaping a common vision for all. In defining what homelessness is in the context of City of Tshwane, consensus in terms of what we understand by the word 'home' should therefore be included in the revised policy.

In terms of the background provided in the preamble to the current policy, it maps out homelessness within the context of six (South African) metropolitan municipalities: Cape Town, Ekurhuleni (East Rand), eThekweni (Durban), Johannesburg, Nelson Mandela and Tshwane. This is critical because it provides a clear picture in terms of what is happening nationally around the issue of homelessness. However, homelessness is not only a national phenomenon; it is also a global problem and therefore it is advisable that the appraised policy should include a brief global synopsis of this challenge. Knowledge of the global context would allow the City of Tshwane to better understand homelessness holistically and therefore propose suitable interventions towards eradicating homelessness; this will surely include issues on cross-border movements (migration).

The background information in the current policy also does not do justice in the area of locating street homelessness within the apartheid past and the legislation thereof. Such an approach will allow the City of Tshwane to deal with problems of evictions and relocation, which were very much part of the apartheid system and are still prevalent today, as noted by Mashau (2014:193):

Evictions and relocation of the homeless from one place to another is not something of the past. The eviction of residents from Schubart Park and Woodlane Village by the City Council and the court cases that followed thereafter can serve as examples of this reality. The tension that exists between city officials and the homeless is a power struggle as to who has the right to urban spaces.

The foregoing suggests that contestation of the right and use of a city like Tshwane is part of the current political landscape. It is reminiscent of the scars of the apartheid past and therefore such vital information cannot be excluded in appraising the current policy. This observation is also covered in the Tshwane Vision 2055 document as follows:

While the City of Tshwane is home to a number of government departments, embassies, tertiary and research institutions, and several heritage sites, the City's historical spatial development approach has resulted in the:

Apartheid-bound experience of social and economic exclusion of the larger part of residents from the city space;

Persistence of apartheid-bound settlement patterns of residents in the City which continues to define the city space; and

City's historical identity as an unreachable social space.

The purpose statement in the current policy reads as follows: 'The purpose of the policy is to ensure the effective implementation of integrated mechanisms to address and prevent street homelessness' (Homelessness Policy for the City of Tshwane, 2013:26). While this is in line with what policies are meant for, namely addressing the needs of citizens, certain measures are very oppressive and defeat the very purpose they are meant to enhance. For instance, the notion of preventing street homelessness as espoused in the current policy is used to criminalise homelessness in our city (Mashau, 2014:198) and from time to time we

witness campaigns by the government to clean people off the streets using the South African Police Service and Metro officials, and in some instances collaborating with security companies like the Red Ants (Van Zuydam, 2014a).

Part two of the current policy defines homelessness as follows: 'Homelessness is regarded as all people living on the streets who fall outside a viable social network of assistance and who are not able to provide themselves with shelter at a given time and place' (Homelessness Policy for the City of Tshwane, 2013:23). This definition covers the scope of street homelessness which was the focus of the study on which this article is based. This section of the policy further identifies two subgroups of street homeless people as follows: transitional; and chronic. While this categorisation is generally accepted (cf. Du Toit, 2010:3; Mangayi, 2014:220), there is a need to broaden it in line with current trends in identifying and defining street homelessness. For instance, a clear distinction should be made between the economic homeless and the situational homeless within the category of transitional homelessness. Those who have been pushed to the streets for economic reasons (the economic homeless) and those who became homeless because of abuse in their family contexts or other natural calamities require different intervention strategies; hence the need to make such a clear distinction in the revised document.

The vision statement of the current policy is outlined as follows: 'The City of Tshwane will strive to eradicate the phenomenon of street homelessness' (Homelessness Policy for the City of Tshwane, 2013:28). There are two critical problems with this statement: first, the vision to eradicate homelessness remains idealistic. In outlining problems that plague efforts to prevent homelessness in New York City, USA, Shinn et al. (2001:95) explain that homelessness is an unplanned phenomenon which keeps on recurring even when serious efforts are made to deal with it. New cases will always be there. This problem in South Africa is so enormous that the biblical saying 'You will always have the poor among you' (John 12:8) remains relevant. It is so huge that studies such as the one conducted by Huchzermeyer (2011) seem to suggest an approach that seeks to embrace informal settlements as part of the reality in African cities. Second, the City of Tshwane is identified in this vision as the only stakeholder striving in our midst towards the eradication of homelessness. This kind of problem in society requires a multi-sectoral approach to manage it and therefore the appraised policy should include this perspective.

The mission statement comes close to defining what also needs to be reflected in the vision statement when stating: 'The City of Tshwane will promote social elevation through holistically integrated approaches in addressing and preventing homelessness focusing on the street homeless themselves, institutions/service providers and the community at large' (Homelessness Policy for the City of Tshwane, 2013:28).

Guiding principles identified in the policy document are holism, integration, empowerment, people-centredness and sustainable partnerships. These principles are well formulated and in a way capture all of the dynamics that hold the policy document together. They not only encourage active participation of citizens but also cover a broader spectrum in terms of scope and accountability. The issue of sustainability is catered for and therefore this section should be retained in appraising the current policy. Matters that need to be added to enhance these guiding principles are issues of projecting the city as a home for all and affirmation of the human dignity of every person living in Tshwane, thereby dealing with the problem of social exclusion.

Policy objectives to address the challenge of homelessness mention the following in the current policy (Homelessness Policy for the City of Tshwane, 2013:28):

Identify needs for care and support and endeavour to provide the appropriate care and prevent homelessness whenever possible.

Provide a long-term solution to homelessness that is sustainable.

Systematically integrate street homelessness into all policies, plans, programmes and strategies at all levels and within all sectors and institutions of government.

Develop and implement a coordinated, multi-sectoral, interdisciplinary and integrated approach in designing and executing programmes and intentions regarding street homelessness.

Conduct research and make available reliable and up-to-date information on homelessness in the City of Tshwane in order to inform policy makers and programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Part five of the current policy deals with the following five policy directives (Homelessness Policy for the City of Tshwane, 2013:29):

- To establish at least one City of Tshwane-owned transit centre for homeless people per region.
- To promote effective policing programmes.
- To create, develop and maintain partnerships between non-governmental organisations, the private sector and the public sector.
- To undertake regular awareness campaigns throughout the city.
- To develop preventative programmes.

Reflecting on the aforementioned policy directives, there are four critical issues that must be raised. Firstly, the City of Tshwane's ambition to own transit centres, one in each region, must be applauded but at the same time we should take note that such effort is just the tip of the iceberg. Different housing options should be offered and other intervention measures like family reunion for some should be part of the strategy. Secondly, the directive to promote effective policing programmes might not prove helpful in the light of the ongoing struggle between the homeless people, the Metro police and other security companies that are used when evictions or forceful removals occur. Thirdly, health issues are not raised in the current directives, especially with a view to accessibility to street medicine, emergency services and public hospitals by the homeless people in the City of Tshwane. Fourthly, the directive to develop preventative programmes should be well defined and broadened. This will address the issue of providing training and skills to the homeless people while opening opportunities for job creation and absorption.

Part six deals with the Institutional Framework for Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Policy. It provides a legislative framework that paves the way for policy appraisal and the implementation framework. The current policy stipulates the following (Homelessness Policy for the City of Tshwane, 2013:34):

A municipality is empowered to adopt or revise policies by the provision of Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000 section 11(3) which provides that a municipality exercises its legislative or executive authority by developing and adopting policies, plans, strategies and programmes, including setting targets for delivery.

This legislative provision paves the way for current appraisal, and therefore the exercise to critically engage the current policy is informed and guided by it. This section should therefore be retained when the current policy is appraised.

The current policy, on this section, proposes the following deliverables in terms of its implementation (Homelessness Policy for the City of Tshwane, 2013:34):

Establishment of an inter-departmental task team;

Development of a communications strategy by engaging relevant departments;

Centralized data on homelessness, individuals, shelters, programmes etc.; and

Establishments of a Homelessness task team for the city (the city with all relevant stakeholders).

This section concludes by outlining the responsibility and accountability of every department within the city in terms of making provision for the implementation of services, programmes and projects within its operational budget annually while they account to the Special Programmes Unit in the Office of the Executive Mayor. There is a need to include an implementation team which is constituted of members from different stakeholders to ensure multi-sectoral participation.

The current policy concludes by highlighting that (Homelessness Policy for the City of Tshwane, 2013:35):

[t]he development of a Homelessness Policy for the City of Tshwane is a pro-active approach to a safe and healthy city and encourages inter-sectoral collaboration (government, non-governmental organisations, business, faith-based organisations, and the homeless people included) working towards the eradication of street homelessness.

There are three key issues in this conclusion that must be applauded. Firstly, it reminds the reader what the policy is all about, namely 'street homelessness in the City of Tshwane'. Secondly, it provides the main intent when the government (City of Tshwane) engaged in the activity of putting together the current policy document, namely 'a pro-active approach to create Tshwane as a safe and healthy city'. It is interesting, however, to note that while issues of safety feature prominently throughout the document, those of health in terms of the wellness of the homeless people are missing in the entire document (in the section on policy directives in particular). Thirdly, the conclusion calls for partnership in dealing with the challenge of homelessness in the City of Tshwane, but does not clearly stipulate the level at which this will take place and how it will be implemented.

4. Eradicating homelessness

In this section an appraisal is made of the current policy document in the light of the foregoing critical analysis.

In appraising the current policy, there is a need to include a definition of what a home is in the glossary. A home should be defined as something more than a right to a house or shelter; it should also include the idea of a sense of belonging to a defined community. Defining a home is therefore a complex matter. A home can be defined and understood in different terms, namely: firstly, as an ideological construct that defines a home in abstract terms – wherein a person will feel at home in a particular context even though

that person does not own any physical structure like a shelter which is called a home. This refers to the emotive sense of belonging in a particular social environment or community and it includes a social dimension of belonging – feeling at home. Secondly, as a physical construct with particular reference to a shelter, whether decent or not. This in essence can include people who are staying in informal settlements. These people have a sense of belonging and ownership even though their home might not be adequate in political terms. Thirdly, as a legal construct that defines a home in terms of citizenship. A holistic approach in defining a home is needed in the context of the City of Tshwane, an understanding that is built upon the social justice paradigm.

The vision of a right to a home with particular reference to owning a shelter is espoused in the Freedom Charter as adopted in Kliptown in 1955: ‘All people shall have the right to live where they choose, be decently housed, and to bring up their families in comfort and security.’ This speaks to the issue of a physical home with a dimension of social security and comfort as the envisioned future for all. This vision is further entrenched in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Chapter 2 of the Constitution, section 26 articulates the right to housing for all (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996:11). The right to housing, however, goes with the right to belong. The Freedom Charter says that ‘South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and [that] no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people’. In the effort to create a home for all, the National Development Plan 2030 also reiterates this vision of a country where everybody belongs. The first section of the vision statement of the National Development Plan 2030 (2011:1) reads as follows:

We, the people of South Africa, have journeyed far since the long lines of our first democratic election on 27 April 1994, when we elected a government for us all.

We began to tell a new story then. We have lived and renewed that story along the way. Now in 2030 we live in a country which we have remade.

We have created a home where everybody feels free yet bound to others; where everyone embraces their full potential. We are proud to be a community that cares.

Tshwane Vision 2055 also embraces the ideal of the city as a home for all. The right to a home and a sense of belonging in terms of citizenship should, therefore, be highly emphasised in appraising the current policy.

In providing a definition of a home, it should also be noted that a right to a home is also the right to land and property ownership. The Freedom Charter says: ‘All shall have the right to occupy land wherever they choose.’ Unless land is accessible and affordable, it will be difficult for the city and all other stakeholders to eradicate homelessness completely. Part of the problem as to why homelessness is on the increase in our city is the question of accessibility and affordability of land which limits access to property ownership (Mashau, 2014:193).

In terms of the preamble and purpose of the current policy, the phrase ‘to ensure the effective implementation of integrated mechanisms to address street homelessness’ is adequate and therefore should be retained. Efforts to clean up streets should be discouraged and therefore the language used in appraising this policy should avoid any form of criminalisation of homelessness. Efforts to tackle and free the shackles of homelessness in our case should be focused on the restoration of human dignity rather than a campaign to

clean the streets of the City of Tshwane. This view is captured by De Beer (2010:1) as follows:

‘Taking back our streets!’ is used as a metaphor for that which was lost and is reclaimed, both personally and collectively: our dignity, our voices, our bodies, our agency; our streets from crime, our parks and public places for our children; our ability to participate in public processes that shape the future of our neighbourhoods.

Restoration of human dignity is critical in our efforts to unshackle the chains of homelessness, as argued by Ngcobo (2014). We should therefore see homelessness as deprivation of human dignity. Human dignity of every person who lives in the City of Tshwane, including homeless people, should be affirmed if we are to resolve this challenge holistically.

As part of the background statement, it is critical to reflect on street homelessness as an expression of the apartheid city structure. The preamble of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa captures this aspect as follows (1996:2):

We, the people of South Africa,
Recognise the injustices of our past;
Honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land;
Respect those who have worked to build and develop our country; and
Believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity.

These words are echoed by the Executive Mayor of Tshwane, Cllr Kgositso David Ramokgopa, in his opening message as captured in the Tshwane Vision 2055 document. In appraising the current policy, this kind of historical background should also be included; lest we forget where we are coming from and repeat the same oppressive measures as in the apartheid era. The scars of the apartheid history are still very much with us. It is asserted that: ‘The apartheid spatial divide continues to dominate the landscape’ (National Development Plan 2030, 2011:24). While places like Mamelodi, Atteridgeville, Ga-Rankuwa, Hammanskraal, Soshanguve and Mabopane, among others, remain symbols of the apartheid system (Mashau, 2014:196), forceful removals and relocation of the homeless in such areas as Schubart Park and Woodlane Village are still very much part of a reality today. It is therefore critical, in our efforts to decriminalise homelessness, to point out that evictions and dislocation of our people as used by the apartheid regime can never be the same tactics used by the democratic government today. Stephan de Beer noted that Number 2 Struben Street has become a dumping ground for the South African Police Service and the Metro Police in their efforts to clean homeless people from our streets (see Van Zuydam, 2014a).

In defining homelessness within the context of Tshwane, it is critical that subgroups or categories of homeless people should be broadened to include economic, situational and chronic homelessness in order to address the issue of foreign nationals in our midst. There are an increasing number of refugees who are asylum seekers in the City of Tshwane and their problem was not catered for in the current policy document. This calls for a serious appraisal of the situation. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa underscores the extension of Ubuntu to foreign nationals who live here when it says: ‘South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity.’ The vision to create Tshwane as a home for all who live in it, as captured in the Tshwane Vision 2055 document, should intentionally embrace and welcome foreign nationals and address their homelessness.

The current vision statement requires serious overhauling in the areas of vision, mission, guiding principles and policy objectives. It should be formulated in a more objective way and should avoid mentioning stakeholders to avoid exclusion of others in the process. Partnership of different stakeholders should be emphasised. The appraised vision statement should talk of 'prevention' and 'management' of homelessness whilst seeking to map pathways out of homelessness. Any proposed vision should include mechanisms through which the homeless can be integrated into the mainstream of society as Tshwane is created as a home for all who live in it. This aspect is clearly addressed in the Tshwane Vision 2055 document. The notion of inclusivity remains critical in mapping out a mission statement that would not treat homeless people as different others. The guiding principles and policy objectives of the current policy are well formulated and therefore should be retained.

Research conducted in the area of policy directives, especially inputs given during the Homelessness Summit that was held in Tshwane on 25–26 May 2015, identified five priorities that inform policy directives (De Beer et al., 2015:18) and are tied to the intervention strategy (National Development Plan 2030, 2011:271), namely:

Creating, developing and sustaining access to diverse housing options that are affordable, accessible and well-located (emphasis added): Chapter 8 of the National Development Plan 2030 talks about transforming human settlement and includes among others efforts to upgrade all informal settlements. The vision therefore is not just about providing housing for all, but affordable and sustainable houses. This vision is outlined against the backdrop of inaccessibility to housing subsidy by more than 25 per cent our South Africa's work force.

Facilitating economic opportunity through life and vocational skills training, an internship programme, job placements and job creation (emphasis added): Chapters 3 and 4 of the NDP addresses this specific priority. Access to economic means will in the long run prove very valuable. Tshwane Vision 2055 calls for the 'business community to partner with the City to improve services in previous marginalised areas, provide social assistance and the quality of life'. This kind of partnership calls business, among others, to actively support initiatives by the City for building a skilled work force as well as for internship programmes for young graduates. Business is also encouraged to develop employment opportunities closer to where people reside. (Tshwane Vision 2055, 2013:259)

Ensuring appropriate and accessible psycho-social and health care infrastructure (emphasis added): Government and non-government organisations should partner in an effort to provide street medicine and health care to the homeless. The majority of homeless people are not able to access public hospitals because of the lack of identification documents. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa protects the right to health care, food, water and social security to all the citizens of the Republic in Chapter 2, section 27. This caters for emergency medical treatment as well.

Facilitating an on-going advocacy, education and awareness programme in order to build an informed, aware and responsible citizenry enabling constructive alternatives for street homeless people (emphasis added). Both the NDP and Tshwane Vision 2055 documents speak about the role of the active citizenry in shaping the future of our country and the City respectively. Apart from on-going advocacy to relieve the plight of the homeless in our midst, Tshwane Vision 2055 calls for active participation by all citizens (the homeless included), to ensure sustainable city development. (Tshwane Vision 2055, 2013:252)

Ensuring appropriate institutional infrastructure, i.e. implementation vehicles for coordination and action, partnerships, on-going research capacity, monitoring and evaluation,

communication, and sustainable sources of finance (emphasis added): The level of participation by all stakeholders and success rate in reaching the set objectives is critical; hence efforts to appraise the current policy should be tied up with a cost implementation strategy. Continued partnership between the City Council and institutions of higher learning is captured in Tshwane Vision 2055 (2013:259) and should be encouraged to ensure continued update on current trends and interventions towards the reduction and prevention of homelessness patterns in the City. One of the strategic positions of this partnership is captured as follows: 'Generate ideas and research that strengthen the City's capacity to be an African capital city of excellence as well as address the challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality in a sustainable manner'. (Tshwane Vision 2055, 2013:259)

The first section of part six, which covers the Institutional Framework for Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Policy, deals with the need to retain the legislative framework and the additions that should be made in the area of implementation:

An implementation team consisting of all the stakeholders should be in place. This team should be made up of representatives from all partners, namely: City of Tshwane, Tshwane Homelessness Forum, Institutions of Higher Learning, business, and other relevant government departments. It might prove valuable to consider the inclusion of members of the diplomatic corps if nationals from other countries are to be catered for in the appraised document. Tshwane Vision 2055 document correctly projects the City of Tshwane as the main diplomatic hub in our country and therefore we have to tap into this resourcefulness. This is captured as follows: 'For a long time the City of Tshwane has been part of a diaspora of many communities and the City's identity as an African capital city and diplomatic hub has also contributed to its cosmopolitan characteristic'. (Tshwane Vision 2055, 2013:215)

The establishment of an inter-departmental task team within CoT [City of Tshwane] should be retained and implemented. This call is also made with regard to the proposal in the current document that: 'Each department within the City will make provision for the implementation of services, programmes and projects within its operational budget annually' (Homelessness Policy for the City of Tshwane, 2013:34). The task team will ensure that it monitors the involvement of all the departments within CoT. It will therefore also serve as a monitoring vehicle to ensure compliance.

The appraised policy document should also include clear guidelines in terms of monitoring and evaluation processes. Planned reviews in terms of implementation should be part of the appraised document. (De Beer et al., 2015:49)

The conclusion section in the current policy is well written and can be retained without any changes. It provides a very good summary in terms of what the policy document is all about, what it seeks to achieve and the proposal to involve not only the City of Tshwane in resolving issues of street homelessness but also other stakeholders. The challenge is that these stakeholders are not identified in the current policy. The identification of stakeholders is in line with the Tshwane Vision 2055, which identifies the following, among others:

In projecting the City of Tshwane as the multicultural home of the African Renaissance, the Tshwane Vision 2055 calls for a partnership with institutions of higher learning in the City. This is captured as follows: 'As part of Tshwane Vision 2055, the City of Tshwane should aim to develop into a local and continental centre of excellence by anchoring itself within its knowledge institutions, especially its institutions of higher learning'. (Tshwane Vision 2055, 2013:90)

Citizens are critical role players. This includes the homeless themselves who should not be treated as objects of our charity but fellow citizens who are just experiencing serious challenges. The challenge of homelessness and related issues can be resolved by active participation of all citizens. This view is expressed in the Tshwane Vision 2055 document as follows: 'Importantly, the City will not see its residents as passively recipient of what it means to live in the capital City; rather, the call will be for creating enduring partnerships that will lead to tangible better life for the people that live in the capital city'. (Tshwane Vision 2055, 2013:91)

Business plays a critical role in combating homelessness through their private sector led initiatives that seek to empower the homeless people and provide them with job opportunities. Issues of economy, infrastructure development and accessibility to jobs for all are highly emphasised in the NDP 2030 and the Tshwane Vision 2055 and therefore these matters should receive due attention in the revision of the current policy. (Tshwane Vision 2055, 2013:259)

5. Conclusion

No South African should indeed rest and delight in the joy of freedom until the chains of homelessness are unshackled. We can only enjoy the fruits of freedom when everybody else is free. In the effort to remain true to this prophetic call by Nelson Mandela, this article provided a critical assessment of the current Homelessness Policy for the City of Tshwane with the aim of empowering the city and all other stakeholders with the necessary tools to eradicate homelessness in this city.

The critical appraisal was done and proposals made using selected national and local policies and strategies. Both the Freedom Charter and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, which is our main policy document and the supreme rule of the Republic, were consulted as the basis on which the National Development Plan 2030 and Tshwane Vision 2055 build. These documents opened avenues that enhance current interventions by the City Council and other stakeholders. A number of recommendations were made and they provide the City Council with the means by which to go ahead with the appraisal as empowered by the provision of the Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000, Section 11 (3). This will allow the City Council to cast their nets wider when coming to implementation. Costed implementation strategy was also recommended, together with the identification of more stakeholders who will assist in such matters as advocacy, fundraising and implementation with monitoring systems in place.

The revised policy document will ensure the following:

- Collective ownership of the policy document and commitment on the side of the government, non-government organisations, faith-based organisations, business and homeless people towards the eradication of homelessness in the City of Tshwane.
- Changing the political landscape to include the politics of compassion, generosity and justice as underpinning guidelines towards the eradication of homelessness in the City of Tshwane.
- Mediation of the homeless people's integration into communities that they found themselves in (this will include foreign migrants).
- Continued research as far as homelessness and policy formulation is concerned.

The foregoing calls us not to rest until every homeless person has found a home in the City of Tshwane, a model which can be replicated in other cities of South Africa and the rest of the world.

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