

**HELD AT THE MOUNTAIN CLUB OF SOUTH AFRICA, HATFIELD STREET, CAPE TOWN,
ON MONDAY 25 MAY 2026 AT 18:00**

1. WELCOME

Teresa Raposo, acting Chair, extended a warm (and grateful) welcome to the approximately 80 attendees. (The weather was chilly, but fine.)

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA & MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING *et al*

The Agenda, Minutes of Special General Meeting of September 2025, Financial Report, and the Chair's Report all having been previously emailed to members (and currently on display in the foyer), T Raposo successfully called for proposers and seconders to ratify each of these documents.

3. CHAIR'S REPORT

T Raposo explained how the core of the **current executive committee** had stepped in and taken over the reins at the Special General Meeting of September 2025 when CIBRA was on the point of collapse, introducing herself (as Treasurer), Monique Vernooy (as Chair), Lisa Malcomess (in charge of publicity), and Niel Vernooy (IT specialist). Gregor Leigh was subsequently co-opted as Secretary.

The Association had also secured the assistance of two **specialists**: Natalie Spires (Web Designer, *pro bono*) and Petra Krusche (Legal Advisor), and although L Malcomess had subsequently resigned from the committee, she continued to assist CIBRA regarding publicity (as witnessed by the size of the meeting). Special thanks were extended to Carl Schmidt who had designed the AGM poster.

CIBRA's revamped website had finally gone live a few days earlier – not entirely gremlin-free! Everyone at the meeting was invited to scrutinise the site and report errors.

Three of CIBRA's **vital roles** were its membership of the City's Spatial Planning Collective (where it had the ear of the City's Urban Planning and Design Department), its seat on the Ward 77 Committee, and its hosting of the Urban Conservation Advisory Panel (which commented on development applications where heritage was concerned).

4. NEW SUBSCRIPTION FEES

Out of ignorance, the new Exco, having studied the state of CIBRA's existing finances, had unilaterally raised the subscription fees to R350 per household (with a R150 rebate for pensioners who wanted to make use of it). William Combrink, however, had pointed out that CIBRA's constitution required that this change could be made only with majority approval at an AGM. T Raposo consequently made a formal proposal to this effect which was seconded by W Combrink himself and the increase was approved without any objections.

5. ARE CAPE TOWN RESIDENTS BEING HEARD BY THE CITY?

T Raposo mentioned CIBRA's ongoing struggle with the City regarding matters such as densification without adequate attention to resulting traffic, damage to and loss of heritage, etc., before introducing Tracey Davies, member of the Constantia Ratepayers' Association and Secretary of the Cape Town Collective Ratepayers' Association (CTCRA) who gave account of the City's tendency to ride roughshod over the opinions and wishes of its citizens.

T Davies reported that the CTCRA had formed in 2024 out of frustration at the City's essentially unilateral land use planning, and now comprised about 100 000 ratepayers (who contributed 60% of the City's residential rates income), thus forming an important lobby group to balance the powerful influence of developers. (It was also a convenient communication platform for ratepayers' associations.)

She then detailed the course of the **City's illegal attempt to impose fixed rates** for certain services based on residents' property values...

Despite 14 000 objections to this manoeuvre (AND being informed by the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs as early as 2018 that it was unlawful in terms of the Municipal Systems Act), the City went ahead and amended rates accordingly in July 2025. Only litigation instituted by the South African Property Owners' Association (SAPOA) and Afriforum (in which the CTCRA appeared as *amicus curiae*) brought a halt to this. On 30 April a full bench of the Western Cape High Court had declared the City of Cape Town's new fixed charges invalid and unlawful (although respite from these charges would manifest only in July).

Further evidence of the City's disrespect for the majority of its ratepayers emerged in the statement released by the Mayor on the day of the judgement, in which he implied that the case had been about higher income groups' opposition to cross-subsidisation of lower income groups – a statement which was not only untrue, but which also deliberately misrepresented the crux of the litigation against an *unlawful procedure*. The CTCRA had attempted to engage with the City regarding alternative ways of raising income (*inter alia* a Tourist Tax in line with several overseas cities, and a more streamlined, efficient municipal staff), but had been rebuffed.

The City had threatened to appeal the judgement, which would have led to both further legal costs for ratepayers' and a delay in the repeal of the illegal rates, but fortunately had reconsidered.

Finally, T Davies outlined the sinister machinations of the **Municipal Planning Tribunal (MPT)**...

Despite a public meeting chaired by Cllr Eddie Daniels at which residents had raised a “huge” number of complaints about land use, detailing specific examples all over the Municipality, the City, hell-bent on densification, had gone ahead and amended the Municipal Planning By-law (MPBL) in such a way as to make objections virtually impossible (or at least ineffective), and essentially allowing for unchecked development

The City had ignored requests from the CTCRA for information about the composition of the MPT, leading to suspicions that there might well be serious conflicts of interest within the department. It was thus practically unaccountable, so once again, given the restrictions on objections, the only recourse would be to challenge future MPT decisions in costly court battles (with ratepayers footing the bill on *both* sides).

All of the above, she said, pointed to the urgent need for ratepayers and residents to join and support their local ratepayers' associations in a concerted attempt to push back against the City's ill-advised and sometimes illegal policies. (The City's introduction of a Spatial Planning Collectives (SPC) for each of its 20 sub-councils was a promising start, she said, but warned that even if public input were to have an impact on *policies*, these would not override the MPBL.)

6. URBAN CONSERVATION ADVISORY PANEL REPORT

Karinina Ingwersen, one of five volunteers who constituted CIBRA's Urban Conservation Advisory Panel (UCAP) thanked the “emergency” committee for continuing to provide the panel with “a home”, and explained its *modus operandi*. Once a month the five members met to discuss an increasing number of applications pertaining to development in heritage areas. (As the City Bowl ran out of space “attacks” on heritage properties were mounting.) A report was then submitted to the City for forwarding to Heritage Western Cape, but she stressed that the panel's input consisted purely of *comments*; there was nothing binding in it.

There was no such thing as Heritage Zoning in Cape Town, and developers were wielding the MPBL indiscriminately, leading to seriously inappropriate development such as what was happening at the bottom of Bree Street.

The panel aspired for balance, seeing a need, *inter alia*, for maintaining Cape Town's tourism assets.

7. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

T Raposo made (the usual) appeal for more volunteers to join the current (barely quorate) Exco, after which she gave brief CVs for each serving member, plus those of two newcomers, Rod Stevens and Joeke Monteiro (both architects). Her motion that all these people be re-elected *en bloc* carried with an overwhelming majority and no objections.

CIBRA's 2026/27 Executive Committee thus consists of (in alphabetical order):

Gregor Leigh, Joeke Monteiro, Teresa Raposo, Rod Stevens, Monique Vernoooy, Niel Vernoooy.

8. WARD COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Francine Higham, Ward 77 Councillor, congratulated the new committee, acknowledging CIBRA's importance in helping her represent local residents. She then delivered a detailed and informative presentation regarding the work she had done/was doing in the Ward (whose boundaries were set to change before the next Municipal Elections.):

- **Parks and Open Spaces:** Much maintenance and refurbishing had taken place, particularly in De Waal Park, Van Riebeeck Park and several others.
- **Keeping Cape Town clean:** This included education projects around waste management, a door-to-door recycling service, as well as dedicated clean-up teams.
- **Addressing Homelessness:** Only one area was still being illegally occupied, but although many others had been cleared of dwellings, offers of alternative accommodation and social services were still largely being spurned by many of the area's regular "rough sleepers".
- **Creating safer communities:** Close liaison with neighbourhood watches, providing equipment (e.g. torches), and the creation of Neighbourhood Security Officers, had resulted in several successful law enforcement operations and even arrests. Some of Ward 77's annual Allocation had been used to purchase more CCTV cameras.
New lane markings and a compulsory stop for heavy vehicles near the top of Kloof Nek Road had recently been introduced to address the increasing number of runaway vehicle accidents down this stretch of road.
Several public realm and pedestrian safety projects had been implemented throughout the Ward.
- **Planned projects:** Cllr F Higham finished off the presentation with a list of upcoming developments.
- **Q&A:** Many questions raised from the floor were answered (*in italics*) by the Councillor, including...

- ❖ Inadequate draining of the Ludlow Road soccer field was leading to local flooding.
In a public participation exercise the majority of local residents had voted against the repair of the partially stone embankment using concrete.
- ❖ There was a lack of toilet facilities at the Lion's Head trail head.
Really SANParks' responsibility, but the Councillor would make enquiries.
- ❖ Thanking L Malcomess for her effective publicity campaign, a resident of 20 years claimed she had been previously unaware of CIBRA and particularly the AGM forum with its opportunity to engage the Councillor. Could there be more regular meeting with the Councillor?
More meetings were a possibility if residents felt it necessary, but it was pointed out (by T Raposo and also from the floor) that relevant, up-to-date information was available on the CIBRA and neighbourhood watch websites
- ❖ There were requests for better timing from traffic lights at the upper Kloof Nek Road pedestrian crossing, better timing and clearer directions from traffic lights Kloof Nek/New Church/Burnside intersection, and the Roeland/Plein/Hatfield intersection (where construction had effectively removed the need for lights at all). The timing of the lights at the complicated Buitenkant/Mill intersection was also criticised.
The Councillor would once again take these matters up with the City.
- ❖ Many sidewalks in the area were reported to be in a deleterious state and there were also many potholes in the roads.
The Councillor outlined a current miscommunication problem between Roads on one hand, and Water and Sanitation on the other, leading to inefficient reinstatement of

roads and sidewalks. (The current 9 month response time was due to be shortened to 30 days from July.) Residents were urged to report specific cases online via the City's e-Service Requests facility (easily accessible via CIBRA's website).

- ❖ The proposed development behind Nazareth House was going to introduce even more cars into the area. What plans did the City have for getting them onto Philip Kgosana Ave through already problematic intersections?
The Councillor and CIBRA had attended the relevant MPT meeting where the issue was fobbed off by developers who claimed that consequent traffic issues were a matter for the City's Traffic Department. Another public participation exercise would be required.
- ❖ Many street light and traffic poles around the Kenmore/Devonport intersection were reported to be decidedly non-vertical!
The Councillor would investigate.
- ❖ The MyCiTi route through the upper parts of Oranjezicht was debated, with several people maintaining that the inclusion of Chesterfield Road was unnecessary (almost no passengers) and difficult for the buses (which scraped their behinds when turning into it). A better idea would be for buses to do a U-turn at the top of Marmion Avenue. A resident who had corresponded with the City for 10 months about this had finally been told to "mind her own business"!
- ❖ A Vredehoek Avenue resident complained about the extent and regularity of vagrant mess (including faeces) outside his property opposite Lazari's.
The Councillor was sympathetic, saying that the City was aware of and trying to ameliorate several vagrant hot-spots. She would request a weekly wash down.

9. THE MEETING ENDED AT 19:50