



BLANTYRE CITY COUNCIL

STATEMENT DELIVERED

BY

HIS WORSHIP CLLR WILD NDIPO, MAYOR OF BLANTYRE CITY

DURING

MAYOR'S CORPORATE DINNER

ON

8TH MARCH 2017

- **Cllr Joseph Makwinja, Deputy Mayor;**
- **Members of Parliament here present;**
- **Fellow Councillors;**
- **Mr Lytton Nkata, representing Chief Executive Officer of Blantyre City Council and the entire management team;**
- **Representative of Malawi Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry;**
- **Mr Mike Mlombwa, president of Indigenous Business Association of Malawi;**
- **Chief Executives;**
- **Business captains here present;**
- **Representatives of various companies;**
- **Members of the Press;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

Good evening my fellow residents!

I am delighted and feel profoundly honoured to host you to this dinner distinguished business captains and senior officers in our City. Let me say thank you to each one of you for gracing this dinner.

If you did not honour our invitation, our effort could have been in vain. This, my fellow residents, is a symbol of oneness and togetherness which bares fruits of success. We do not take this for granted because it accords us a rare opportunity as a Council to interact with you, the people we serve.

Ladies and Gentlemen, tonight opens another chapter of our City, Blantyre, as we move on in an effort to realize our dream. We have an opportunity to determine our destiny together. It is not about what the Council has achieved or intends to achieve, it is about what we, together, have achieved or what we can achieve.

We all aspire to live in a City that offers the best. We all have a dream city. This platform accords us a chance to share those dreams. Rome was not built in a day. We are all familiar with this saying. Let us start from somewhere. A journey of a thousand miles starts with a step. Tonight, we are not taking the first step because this journey started in 2014 when you voted us into office. Together we are shaping the future of Blantyre City. This is in line with our *motto* **“Taking the City back to the People”** and you are the people referred to.

Deputy Mayor and Fellow residents, unity has brought us this far. We have seen the fruits of working together. We have seen Blantyre City transforming. We need to push on. We cannot abandon the ship midway lest we all sink. We have the next generation to answer to.

At this point, let me utilize this opportunity to graciously thank the former Mayor Councillor Noel Chalamanda for leading the

Council in strengthening its relationship with the corporate residents. Tonight, we would like to reaffirm our commitment to this relationship.

As a Council, we cherish the support from the corporate world and we would like to engage the private sector more and move the city in the desired direction. We have embarked on a progressive journey and my leadership has no intention to disturb anything which was started by my predecessor but rather to reinforce and do more together with you our partners.

The aim of this dinner basically is to introduce ourselves to you and outline the plans the council has and highlight areas of cooperation with the private sector. There are many ways you can come in to work with us.

Ladies and gentlemen, we all can appreciate that efforts are being made to improve cleanliness, beauty and general outlook of the city. We are doing our best to provide municipal services to your satisfaction. But definitely, we cannot achieve the ultimate goal if the corporate world leaves everything to the Council. You have a very big role to play and we need a very strong collaboration. The Council needs your cooperation and support in various ways. Most of you have already demonstrated your

commitment to the City by partnering the Council in a number of areas of service delivery such as waste management, natural resources management through tree planting, beautification through adoption of sites including roundabouts among others.

Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me now to give you a picture of the direction the Council is taking in anticipation that you, the corporates, will partner with us.

1. REVIEW OF BY-LAWS

Fellow residents, the Council's Bylaws were formulated and passed in 2002. Over the years, there have been challenges that the Bylaws have failed to address. Some challenges include

- a. the emergency of spirit sachets in the City,
- b. touting,
- c. unprecedented high levels of pollution from industrial waste,
- d. emergence of agricultural activities in the City such as pig farming and poultry.
- e. emergence of new businesses such as car washing, cellphone and computer repairing just to mention a few.
- f. increase in road traffic.
- g. increase in fire incidents.
- h. collapse of some buildings in the City

The Council has, therefore, embarked on an exercise to review its Bylaws. During the review exercise, the existing bylaws will be

improved and new bylaws will be introduced to deal with emerging matters not hitherto regulated under the present bylaws.

Ladies and Gentlemen, to ensure that the bylaws really address problems faced by the City residents and all stakeholders who do their businesses in Blantyre, the Council is encouraging residents in the City to contribute ideas towards the by-law review process by sending their views to the the secretariat.

Some of the new bylaws that the Council intends to adopt are

- I. Building Bylaws
- II. Urban Agriculture Bylaws
- III. Domestic and Industrial Effluent Discharge Bylaws
(Alternatively Environment Management Bylaws)
- IV. City Rates and Other Revenue Collection Bylaws
- V. Non- Governmental Organisation Bylaws

2. GENERAL CLEANLINESS, SANITATION, WASTE MANAGEMENT

Distinguished business captains, the Keep Blantyre Clean and Green campaign has taken us together to this far and results are promising in the current economic scenario. Let me take this opportunity to convey our special thanks to all individuals and corporate partners that came forward to support this

initiative. It is my sincere trust that we will continue to hold hands for the betterment of our City.

Blantyre City is experiencing a high rate of urbanization, which is significantly contributed by rural to urban migration. Consequently, generation of wastes has also increased proportionally with the increased rate of urbanization. Rapid urbanization, if well managed can be a good development especially for businesses and industrial growth. To the contrary, urbanization in our setting has been synonymous with informal settlements and proliferation of informal businesses.

The informal settlements and businesses are presenting challenges for the City Council to provide social services including sanitation and waste management which are the basic necessities for residents. It is our hope that while the corporate world realise possible benefits from the high urbanization, you will not turn a blind eye to such social needs of the poor majority and consider investing in their social wellbeing including sanitation and waste management.

In this view, we find it appropriate for the private sector to partner with the Council as we instill a sense of habit and

responsibility to our residents for the proper garbage as well as human excreta disposal in designated places.

We have to provide street litter bins visible for the use by the public. It is estimated that a total of two hundred street litter bins are required for placement in both Blantyre and Limbe CBDs as well as in transit/exit routes. Furthermore, larger communal bins (skip bins) are in short supply to cater for the informal settlements to dispose their litter, and for this we have plans to provide communal waste transfer stations and skip bins in unplanned settlements.

Disposal of garbage doesn't end in the community, there is need to transport the garbage to the dumpsite.

And you may wish to know that the Council is facing challenges in collection of garbage which is mainly due to inadequate number of refuse collection vehicles resulting in late or irregular collection. Hence, we are appealing to the corporate world to come forward by supporting the City Council with refuse collection trucks for our timely emptying of the full litter bins.

Ladies and gentlemen, all litter collected from the City has to be dumped at Mzedi dumpsite and this place has become a

challenge to manage as it has become full and that the Council has limitations to acquire a new area of land to turn into a dumpsite due to land scarcity.

For this reason, the City Council is encouraging the concept of waste recycling to save the limited land resources for productive developments. We have good examples in island Cities such as Singapore that recycle the majority of their wastes.

Yes we can do it if the private sector can work in collaboration with the Council. We are aware of companies that have turned recycling industry as their line of production but we must nurture the growth of this culture in all our people by promoting separation of wastes at source for safe recycling. In this way we will divert waste from the dumpsite.

A clean City cannot be achieved with the rest of the residents being spectators; we need to sensitize them through our leadership role in taking affirmative action to adopt these practices.

Distinguished business captains, we wish to invite you to consider sponsoring community clean up campaigns as some have done with tree planting. We will be more than ready to

partner with you say on monthly schedules with different institutions.

On public conveniences, you might have heard about a project the Council is implementing with the aim of establishing Service Level Agreements with private sector on operation of public conveniences and other sanitation investments, this is a deliberate effort by the Council to allow the private sector at all levels to provide sanitation services in partnership with the Council.

In this project, the private sector is being encouraged to invest in public conveniences and be able to collect user fees while adhering to quality services as provided by the Council; this may include Build Operate and Transfer. We invite the private sector to participate in this project by supporting small scale entrepreneurs.

Let me take this opportunity to sensitize this gathering that Blantyre City Council also provides services such as fumigation and pest control at a small fee; if institutions patronize these services, it will go a long way in sustaining the operations of the Council. Feel free to make inquiries whenever you may require such services.

3. POLLUTION IN THE CITY (MUDI AND OTHER RIVERS)

Fellow residents, Blantyre City is served by five Waste Water Treatment Plants (WWTP) namely Soche, Blantyre, Limbe, Chirimba and Maone. However, only two waste water treatment plants, Soche and Blantyre, are currently partially working. You may also wish to know that the sewer lines that collect wastewater to these treatment plants are associated with one or two rivers

A very good example is the Mudi trunk sewer that runs along both Nasolo and Mudi Rivers. Unfortunately, sewage is flowing in Mudi River because people vandalized the pipes. Apart from vandalizing, the sewage system is very old. Some sections of the network were constructed in the early sixties. Most of the pipes are worn out causing sewage to leak out and allowing entry of soil into the system. With time the soil accumulates rendering the pipe dis-functional.

As a long term solution, the Council requires about **MK 7 Billion** out of which **MK2 Billion** is for the Mudi Trunk Sewer and Blantyre Wastewater Treatment Plant. You can appreciate that the figures are quite huge. We seek your intervention. If we can work together, we can deal with this challenge.

As a short term solutions of restoring the environmentally degraded Mudi River, the Council assessed both Nasolo and Mudi Rivers and identified critical sewage spillage point sources, solid waste dumping sites and general environmentally degraded sections that require financial assistance for river cleaning.

From the assessment, the council intends to rehabilitate the vandalized pipe bridge sewer lines, construct solid waste transfer stations and develop stream/water parks along the Rivers which will require **Four Hundred and Fifty-Nine Million, Two Hundred Thirty Eight Thousand, Six Hundred and Twenty Kwacha, Ninety-one Tambala (MK459,238,620.91)**, out of which **Forty Six Million Eight Hundred Seventy One Thousand Seventy Five Kwacha Zero Tambala (MK46,871,075.00)** is for rehabilitation of pipe bridge sewer lines crossing Mudi and Nasolo rivers and **Three Hundred Thirteen Million, Three Hundred Sixteen Thousand Kwacha, Seventy-Eight Kwacha, Sixty-five Tambala (MK 313,316,078.65)** is for the River Cleaning Activities.

Therefore the Council requests your assistance either financially or by adopting a mile along the sections of the river in question.

4. BEAUTIFICATION AND RECREATION CENTERS AND PARKS;

Ladies and Gentlemen, Blantyre City Council is determined to create beautiful and safe landscapes by upholding to best

principles of leisure and hospitality management, creative cultural heritage and ardent environmental management in the city.

To achieve this, we are developing and managing the City's landscape environment, protecting the city's biodiversity, conserving and managing forest cover, soil water and air resources, promoting recreation, culture and youth development and developing and managing the City's Parks and significant open spaces.

Our focus is to develop and manage parks in all open spaces and restoration of dilapidated parks. Currently city of Blantyre boasts of many open spaces such as Njamba, Rangeley (Mudi), Stella Maris, Jubilee (C.I.) and streams such Mudi, Limbe and Naperi streams and Chimwankhunda and Chiwembe dams. All these assets can be converted into beautiful parks for amusement and recreation purposes.

We are in the process of identifying willing and capable corporate institutions to partner with us in managing public gardens, open spaces and parks. Some of you may have heard or are already onboard. It is our appeal to you this evening to come forward and work with us.

We started a door to door campaign on all business and residential premises to remind our residents on the need to keep their premises clean and green. We plead with you to take this excise with all the seriousness it deserves so that we can improve the face of our city so that it can reclaim its position as one of the cleanest cities in Africa.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have plans to upgrade the Mandala nursery into a *garden centre* where we shall undertake a retail operation that sells plants and related products for the domestic *garden* as its primary business. This garden will be developed from the concept of the retail plant nursery but with a wider range of outdoor products.

5. TOWN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE CITY

Ladies and gentlemen

In 2013, the City Council made a request to the Government to extend the City boundaries to cover areas of Lunzu, Chileka and parts of Lirangwe.

The proposal was approved in principle pending approval of the Land Bill. Now that the Land Bill has been approved, plans are underway to map the extent of the City boundary. Once complete, the City shall be in a position to acquire new land for

new urban development. Informal settlements will be a history especially in the urban fringes.

The City Council has lined up urban development projects some of which will be carried out under the Public Private Sector Partnership (PPP) arrangement.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have all been concerned about the parking space in our City; well here is the good news. Blantyre City will have new Car Parkade which shall be developed at an existing car park located at the junction of Livingstone Avenue and Chilembwe Road in downtown Blantyre, 0.3Ha in size.

The proposed parkade shall have four floors with the ground floor accommodating commercial activities. Once completed the building shall accommodate approximately 300 vehicles, greatly reducing parking congestion on the main streets within the CBD.

The project is estimated to cost MKK1.46 Billion (USD2 Million). This is not small money. That is why we are appealing to potential investors both local and foreign to come forward to discuss with us on how best this project can be implemented in partnership.

Ladies and Gentlemen

As a fast growing City, Blantyre needs proper transport infrastructure that can ease movement of people in and out of the City. This can only be achieved if the City Council fully controls operations of the bus terminals.

You can agree with me that we have a lot of bus operators that operating illegally at Wenela Bus Terminal.

Constructing a new bus terminal will ensure continuous use of the bus terminal by all bus operators, increase safety and security whilst reducing parking congestion in the City. The total land size is 32Ha. The terminal will be constructed at an existing land within Wenera area and it will also cost MK1.46 Billion (USD2 Million).

Other lined projects by the Council are Mzedi Waste Management, Physical Addressing and Postcode, one way traffic system in Blantyre CBD and review of the Blantyre Urban Structure.

This can be of success if we all work hand in hand to make Blantyre a City of choice.

6. IMPROVED ROAD NETWORK

Fellow residents, Blantyre City deserves high-quality public infrastructure with modern road transport network to create bedrock of the City's long term socio-economic development.

In order to ensure quality road infrastructure and functional traffic management system, Blantyre City needs to have its road infrastructure network rehabilitated.

This is in line with the current Malawi Government's efforts to transform the country's urban centres with sound public infrastructure development for new all weather (macadamized) roads and bypasses.

The Deputy Mayor, Ladies and gentlemen, you may wish to recall that in the just ended financial year 2015/2016, the Council constructed new six asphalt roads in Blantyre City.

In the current fiscal year 2016/2017, the following roads have been budgeted for asphalt surfacing rehabilitation as follows;

- a. Mbayani Market to TAMTAM (2.7 Km).
- b. Bangwe-Mvula Primary School to St Patricks Secondary School (3Km).
- c. Nanjiriri to Mapanga (2.5 Km)
- d. Safarao Road in Ndirande (1.3 Km)
- e. Namiyango Ring Road (2.2 Km)
- f. Chigumula to Nteje Parish (3Km)

Fellow residents, the importance of street lights cannot be overemphasized. We cannot successfully curb theft and vandalism in our City if it is in the dark.

Improved street lighting is widely thought to be an effective means of preventing crime. Indeed, residents in crime-ridden neighborhoods often demand that the lighting be improved and the general expectation is that improved lighting does indeed reduce crime.

The current financial year street lighting projects include:

- a) Masauko Chipembere Highway and Livingstone Avenue in Limbe

- b) Dalton Road (*Kanjedza R/A to Dalton Traffic Lights Via Limbe Bus Depot*).
- c) Ndirande Ring Road (*Blantyre Girls to Ndirande Flats joining Makata Road*).
- d) Makata Road (*Chichiri R/A to HHI T- Junction via SOBO*).
- e) Victoria Avenue (*Mount Soche to MBTS-CI Church*).
- f) Njamba Road (*Njamba Secondary School to TVM along the park*

Ladies and gentlemen, the Council does not only care about the motorist, but pedestrians are also in our minds. We will therefore need to improve our existing traffic light signals and introduce new ones at points where we experience congestions or interference with pedestrians.

All these projects cannot be done by the Council alone, we will need your hand somewhere somehow. When we come at your doors asking for assistance in a certain project, please do not shut us down help us with the little things you have. Let us all join hands and create a Blantyre that we all desire.

7. REVENUE GENERATION (CITY RATES AND OTHERS)

Fellow residents, you may wish to know that the Council has to generate almost 95 percent of its revenue budget to finance its operations. Currently, these funds are generated from the following sources:

- Property rates
- License Fees
- Market Fees
- Parking fees
- Advertising fees
- Other fees and charges

Property rates make up almost 60 percent of the revenue for the Council. This is tax that is paid by all property owners in the city. Despite it being the council's main source of revenue, we experience a lot of resistance from most residents to pay. This is mainly due to the resident's tendency to attach payment of rates to service. Further, there is general unwillingness to pay taxes.

The Council is currently being owed over MK1 billion in property rates. Several strategies have been undertaken in an effort to recover this sum. The council has resorted to taking legal action on property owners who have become too difficult to pay through other means.

We know that we have property owners here tonight, both at corporate and individual level. The payment of property rates starts with you. If all of us could pay our property rates on time, it would have a great impact on the performance of the Council in delivering the essential services to the city residents.

Payment plans are negotiated if you are unable to pay the whole amount at once. Why attract unnecessary embarrassment to yourself by allowing sheriffs to impound your property when you can pay in an amicable way.

License fee is the fee that is paid by business owners for operating their business in the City. Please take note that our license is not regulatory but rather attached to your operating of a business within the City boundaries. This is paid annually at the beginning of the Council's financial year in July.

Parking fees is the fee charged per hour for parking a vehicle in the city's parking spaces. Some vehicle owners default payment of parking fees which is not in line with the resident's responsibility towards running the City. Blantyre would be a city from another planet if we all join hands and carry out our responsibilities.

This evening, is another opportunity for us to renew our commitment towards our own city. Pay the City rates to transform Blantyre.

Fellow residents, most of you are aware that we re-launched the Mayor's Trophy last year. This is a trophy which started in 1968 with the purpose of developing sports in the City. It involves primary school pupils, thereby unearthing raw talent among the youths at tender age.

I would like to make a very humble plea this evening. Make a contribution towards the Mayor's Trophy.

Ladies and Gentlemen, by either donating towards the successful implementation of the competition or indeed adopting the Mayor's Trophy, you are helping someone somewhere to unearth his or her talent and that one day he or she becomes a big star.

Anything that you are going to contribute towards this trophy will change a life of someone.

If you adopt the Mayor's Trophy, it shall be called by your company's name. The budget for this year's edition of the Mayor's Trophy competition is already formulated and it is only K20 million.

Let us work hand in hand to help the pupils to do what they love doing and become what they want to become in life.

In conclusion, I would like to tell you this. What we have outlined are our ambitious plans. Without your support, nothing tangible will materialize.

Let us join hands to make Blantyre City a better place to live for everyone.

I thank you for your attention.