

Gradual Phasing Out of Shacks

Council established the Working Group Committee on Shacks with the objective of developing policy guidelines for the gradual phasing out of shacks. The phasing out of shacks is a mammoth task which requires the acceptance and support of the community. The public will, in due course, be informed at a public meeting on the mandate and powers of this committee. The committee reported back to Council with the following proposals which were approved by Council:

The Committee:-

- (i) *Must determine whether to work from the premise of total elimination of shacks or just to reduce them in order to make them safer and habitable.***
- (ii) *Must have community consultation with property owners as well as shack dwellers with regard to:***
 - (1) *the number of shacks permissible per erf.***
 - (2) *schedule for time-framed reduction/elimination of shacks***
 - (3) *acceptable / suitable building materials for shacks as well as standards for shack construction taking health, safety and security concerns into consideration.***
- (iii) *Must investigate appropriate incentive scheme(s) for property owners to induce them to get rid of shacks and also to enable them to build decent rental units/flats for their tenants. Currently the shacks serve two purposes: i.e. provide income to landlords and shelter to tenants.***
- (iv) *Must investigate other shelter options to backyard shacks e.g. the Progressive Development Area, considering the fact the elimination or reduction of shacks may result in an increased demand for residential land.***
- (v) *Must investigate alternative options for business shacks, considering that some shacks are used as business premises.***
- (vi) *Must identify critical issues to be addressed through housing consumer education programme.***
- (vii) *Must hold the property (erf) owner(s) responsible for shacks erected on their properties.***
- (viii) *Must provide a working definition of what is regarded as a shack, for reference purposes during deliberations.***
- (ix) *Must ensure that provisions are made in Building Regulations to accommodate shacks of which the detailed regulations will be dealt with through municipal by-laws. The Building Regulations must be adopted to grant Council the power to compile such by-laws as deemed necessary.***
- (x) *Must ensure that development standards such as coverage, building lines, height and maximum allowable area of shacks are discussed extensively.***

- (xi) Must ensure that adequate sanitary facilities are provided by the landlord. These should include a toilet, a shower, a wash basin and kitchen zinc, the details of which are discussed by the committee.**
- (xii) Must ensure that the provision of cooking facility by the landlord is catered for.**
- (xiii) Must maintain balance between affordability, safety and security. Minimum standards must be determined with regards to the wall, roof and floor structures.**
- (xiv) Must determine and spell out Provision of electricity: physical installation, standard, methodology and materials to be used must be determined and spelt out.**
- (xv) Must establish construction standards to minimize fire risks and hazards.**
- (xvi) Must determine possible levies against those having shacks on their erven (and who should contribute – property owner or shack dwellers?).**
- (xvii) Must implement, monitor and control the Shack Policy and determine how transgressors would be dealt with.**
- (xviii) Must include the office of the Governor in the whole exercise in order to benefit from the support of this office.**